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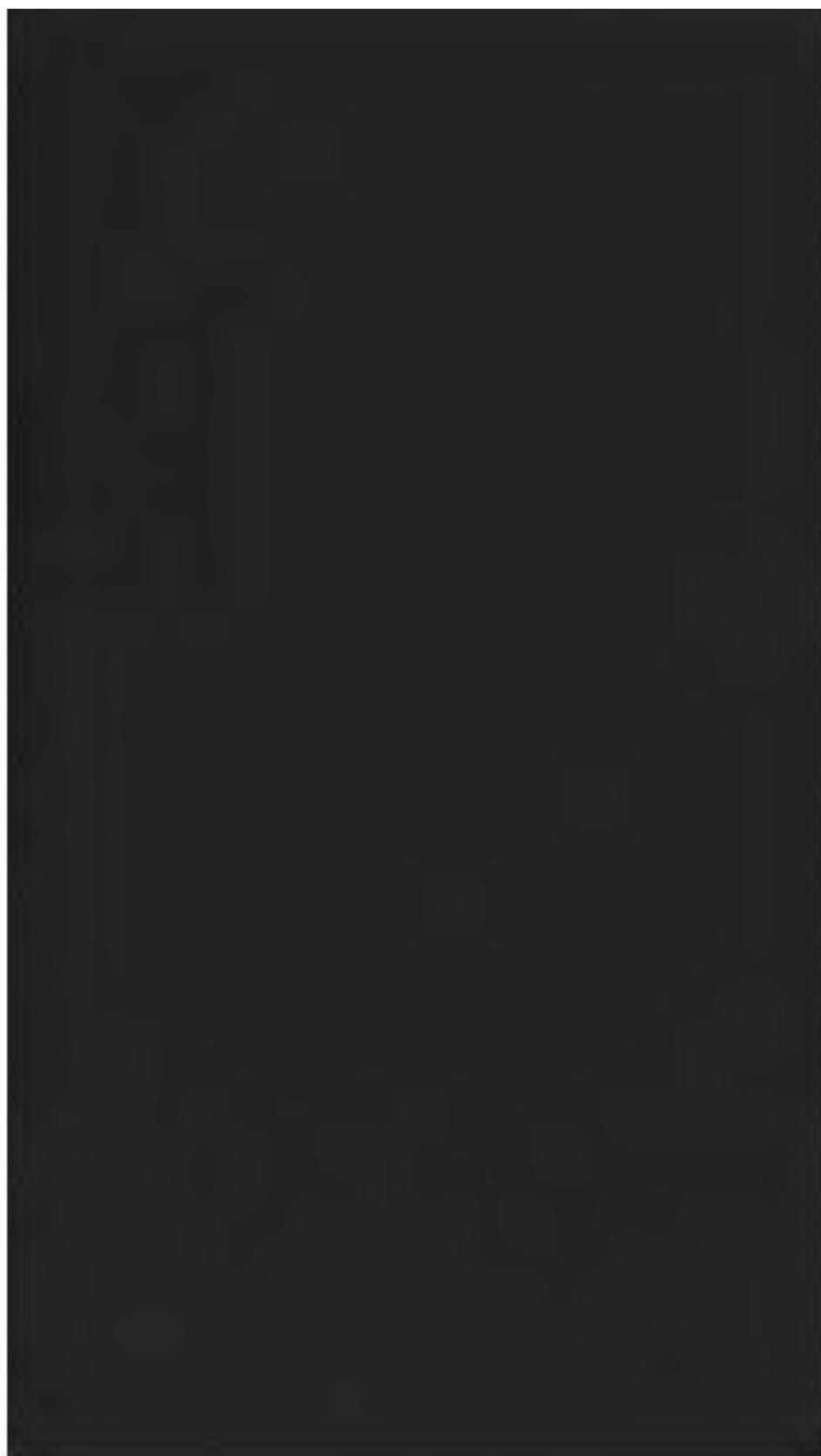
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THE MEMBER FOR PARIS









Murray, Eustace Clare Grenville  
" THE

# MEMBER FOR PARIS:

*A Tale of the Second Empire.*

. By TROIS-ETOILES.

" A force de marcher l'homme erre, l'esprit doute,  
Tous laissent quelquechose aux buissons de la route,  
Les troupeaux leur toison et l'homme sa vertu."

VICTOR HUGO.



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# THE MEMBER FOR PARIS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### CE FUT UN DEUIL DANS LE PAYS.

HAUTOURG on the Loire is a venerable old town, which played an important part in French history some six or seven hundred years ago, when gentlemen wore plate-armor and cut each other's throats by way of pastime. If we may trust the legend, it originally formed part of the fief of a mighty Count Alaric, who, being a disloyal subject and in league with the Devil, thrashed his king, Louis le Gros, in a field adjoining the town, which Providence and the municipal council between them have since appointed for a brick-kiln. If you turn to Froissart you will find that a Count de Hautbourg fought behind John II. at Poitiers, and was in the train of that ill-starred monarch when he rode through London on a tall horse, having his vanquisher, the Black Prince, beside him on a small one. Three centuries and a half later, another Count de Hautbourg turned up in the Bastille, where he had been put for being a Jansenist; and in 1793 a certain Raoul-Aimé, Marquis of Hautbourg and Clairefontaine, was heard of on the guillotine, where he perished, it seems, with remarkable good grace and equanimity. I am not going to weary you with a long account of what the Hautbourgs did in exile during the Republic and the reign of Napoleon; but if you are versed in contemporary history you must have read all about that Marquis of H. and C., who accompanied Louis XVIII. to Hartwell, married in England Mary-Anne Sophia, daughter of Ezekiel Guineaman, Esquire, and died, under the Restoration, a duke, a peer of France, and a secretary of state. To him succeeded his eldest son, who was also a peer of France, but never a minister, and

who figured as one of the leaders of that "anti-dynastic" opposition, which made the life of poor Louis Philippe so extremely unpleasant to him. This nobleman being in Paris in 1851, at the time when Monsieur Bonaparte, as he called him, effected his *coup d'état*, was so unfortunate as to take a walk in the afternoon of the 3d December, at the precise moment when the emissaries of the said Monsieur B. were most intent upon their work. Finding himself suddenly face to face with a troop of M. de Goyon's horse, whose mission it was to clear the streets, he made an attempt to fly—the first attempt of the kind, be it said incidentally, that he had ever made in his life. But well-mounted dragoons are not always so easy to fly from. You will remember that on this occasion the brave defenders of order had been liberally plied with wine, and had received instructions not to spare anybody who stood in their way. These instructions they obeyed; and so it befell that the noble scion of the Hautbourgs, who entertained about the same feelings towards democracy as he did towards pitch, came, thanks to the grim irony of fate, by the death of a democrat. For, when the slain were picked up on the evening of that glorious day which slew a republic and founded a dynasty, the Legitimist duke was found lying side by side with a subversive sweep, a costermonger of socialist tendencies, and a small boy, three feet high, who must have been wicked beyond his years, seeing that out of his bleeding, perverse little hand was snatched a red toy-flag emblazoned with the heinous words, *Vive la Liberté!*

Some three years after this, that is, in the year 1854, the time at which this narrative commences, the domain and castle of Clairefontaine, about two miles distant from Hautbourg, had not yet been visited by their new master. The estate, which dur-

ing five and thirty years had teemed with splendor, animation, and festivity, now looked as if a sudden blight had fallen upon it. Grass had begun to sprout over the stately avenue, a good mile long, which led from the lodge-gates of the manor-house to its principal entrance. The shutters of the castle were all closed and barred. The stables, in which the last Duke of Hautbourg had stalled six and twenty horses, were deserted. The handsome little Gothic chapel, one of the sights of the country, in which it was reported that Fénelon had once preached, and in which it was a certified fact that his Majesty King Charles X. had been several times to mass during the visit he paid to the first Duke in 1827, was become a home for spiders; and — worse sign than all — the monumental fountain standing in the centre of the state courtyard — fountain built on the designs of the famous sculptor Pierre Puget, and covering a spring from which the manor drew its name of Clairefontaine — was overgrown with moss, thus revealing that its dolphins and naiads had long ceased to dash spray out of their open mouths, and horned conchs into the porphyry-basin under them. Had it not been for the unsightly ruins of an unfinished summer-house, which had evidently been begun in the late Duke's time, and abandoned to the mercies of wind and rain at his death, one would have fancied it was full a hundred years since anybody had trod those leaf-strewn alleys and silent chambers. Now and then in the very early morning, or in the evening towards sunset, an old crone was to be seen painfully mowing with a hand-sickle the long grass on the lawn, or gathering peaches, apricots, and cherries in the orchard, or picking lapfuls of roses and pinks from what had once been the flower-garden; but she partook more of the phantom than of the human being. If questioned, she would tell you that she was the lodge-keeper, and that she gathered the fruit and flowers to prevent them being wasted. She was a rather dismal old woman, with a querulous intonation of voice, but — like all French people of either sex — she was ready enough to talk, and would spin her quavering yarns by the hour when interrogated civilly. "She had no idea," she said, "when the new Duke was coming; she believed he lived in foreign parts. Somebody had told her that he was an odd gentleman — not mad, Monsieur, she didn't mean that, but queerlike in his ways. No one had ever seen him at Clairefontaine since he was a little bit of a boy just so high; no, he hadn't even come to M. le Duc's funeral, which was thought strange, and had made folks about the country talk a

little, though our Holy Virgin forbid that she should find any thing to say concerning a gentleman who was a Hautbourg and certainly had good reasons for all he did. But you see, sir, despite her being an old woman, she couldn't help hearing what people said, and them as talked said that Monsieur, the new Duke, had not been very well off before, and that it was peculiar he shouldn't have come to the burial of a relation whose death had brought him a million francs a year. Ay, Monsieur, it was full a million, if not more. All the land from Hautbourg to Clairefontaine, from Clairefontaine to Boisfroment and Clairebourg, and from Clairebourg to Sainte-Sophie, belonged to the estate. To judge of the size, one should have seen all the tenants assembled, some three or four hundred, on horseback, as she had seen them when Monseigneur, the late Duke, came of age, and when 'Monsieur le Roi Charles Dix' arrived on a visit with Monsieur le Duc d'Angoulême and Monseigneur le Duc de Quelen, Archbishop of Paris. Ah, that was a sight to see, that was! but, mon Dieu, those times were far gone, and men were no longer now what they were then. In those days she was a young woman, and her husband, who was head-gamekeeper, had loaded his Majesty's own gun when there was a battue in the preserves. He was paralyzed now, her husband, but he had been 'a brave;' he had served as sergeant in the Prince of Condé's army at Coblenz along with the first Duke, who was Marquis then; and he had lived in Monseigneur's household upwards of forty years. There was no head-gamekeeper now, in fact no gamekeeper at all, and the estate was managed by a new agent, M. Claude." Was he a kind man, this Monsieur Claude? — "Oh, yes, sir; she couldn't but say he was kind enough; he was a quiet-spoken gentleman from Paris, and never hard to the tenants. But, after all, Monsieur" — and here the old woman's voice would wax more querulous and whimpering — "it wasn't the same as having M. le Duc here. The country had been all dead like for the last three years, and she had heard tell that if this went on much longer half the folks up at the town yonder would be ruined. You see, sir, they used to live on Monseigneur, they did, and the new Duke's keeping away was no more nor less than taking the bread out of their mouths."

This account, gloomy and piteous as it might sound, was yet cheerful in comparison to what one heard in the town itself. There the closing of the Château of Clairefontaine and the protracted absence of the new Duke were viewed as public calamities; and one had only to walk along the

tortuous old streets, and mark the dejected faces of the shopkeepers, to guess that unless M. le Duc put in an appearance very shortly the old woman's prediction about the *gazette* was not unlikely to be realized. As we said at starting, Hautbourg was a venerable town, but it had had its day, and it could no longer afford to do without patronage. On each side of the main street, which was called *La Rue de Clairfontaine*, the sign-boards and devices over the shops (for sign-boards are as much in vogue in French provincial towns as they were in England 150 years ago) testified abundantly, that, spite of revolutions and noble principles of equality, the relations between borough and manor-house were as feudal as they had ever been at the best of times. Over the crockery-dealer's was the picture of a young person standing beside a bubbling fountain and handing a mugful of water to a knight in plate-armor, with underneath the words: *Au Chevalier de la Claire fontaine*. Over the ironmonger's was another knight in plate-armor, dispensing what appeared to be shovels and tongs to his menials, and exhorting them to be "*toujours prêts*," which was the motto of the Hautbourgs. Over the pork-butcher's was a Hautbourg slaying a wild-boar; over the gunsmith's a fourth Hautbourg firing off a culverin, and so on. Of course the chief inn was the Hotel de Clairefontaine, and its rival over the way, the Hotel Monseigneur; and equally, of course, there was in the midst of the market-place an equestrian statue of the Hautbourg of Crécy, with a long homage in Latin to the valor of that warrior.\*

The Dukes of Hautbourg had always done their very best to foster in the borough a spirit of dependency, and with the greater success, as the town, having no manufactures to support it, and being situated neither on a river, nor in the vicinity of a large canal, nor on the trunk-line of an important railway, possessed none of the elements of modern vitality, and would probably have dwindled away into a village had it not been for the great family at Clairefontaine. It was to this family the town owed every thing. Its schools, its free library, its museum of stuffed birds, its restored church, filled with furbished brasses and stained-glass windows; its restored gate, out of which the Count Alaric had proceeded when he went to beat Louis VII., and on which still bristled a spike, where it was assured this same Count used to spit the heads of his subjects who were behind-

hand with their taxes; \* its quaint fountain and horse-trough in the street near the cattle-market, its red-brick alms-houses and free dispensary, — all these institutions had been built, founded, or renovated with Clairefontaine money. Furthermore, the late Duke, with a view to keeping up his territorial influence, had spent annually some four hundred thousand francs in the town. All the necessaries of life in the way of furniture, food, and clothing, both for himself and servants, and many luxuries also, which a less politic nobleman might have bought in Paris, this far-sighted landlord purchased at Hautbourg. He even went the length of wearing in Paris coats cut by the Hautbourg tailor, and of suffering none but the Hautbourg doctor to attend him in illness — acts of courage these which entailed their reward, for I honestly believe the two facts combined did more for the popularity of the Duke, and for the self-esteem of the borough, than if Monseigneur had caused Hautbourg to be raised to the rank of a first-class prefecture, and had brought a cardinal-archbishop to reside there. But this was not all. The establishment at Clairefontaine was not only an ever-flowing source of profit in itself; it also acted as a great central planet around which gravitated a number of satellites, in the shape of smaller country-houses, occupied by the lesser nobility and gentry of the department. So long as the hospitable doors of the castle remained open these lesser gentry abounded. Harvest-festivals, archery-meetings, hunting-parties, masked-balls, and charity-fairs, followed each other in unbroken, edifying succession. Not a small purse but endeavored to vie with the big purse: hall played the suit of castle, and villa returned the lead of hall; the whole summer and autumn season was a carnival, and the direct result appeared in this, that the trading-men of Hautbourg grew fat, their wives and children waxed ruddy, and the borough in general wore a sleek and prosperous look, such as speaks of plenty, and savings in the funds.

All this, however, was a thing of the past now. The eclipse of the great planet had involved that of the satellites, and Hautbourg was fallen of a sudden from its snug position of ease into penury, the more hard to bear as it had been unexpected. The Hautbourg of 1854 was but the ghost of the Hautbourg of 1851. Can you fancy Capua ravaged by a pestilence, Pompeii become bankrupt, or Herculaneum abandoned just previous to its interment? There

\* This statue was erected at the Restoration, the original one standing before 1789 having been melted down under the Republic, one and indivisible, to coin pence with.

\* I ought to mention that there were some who insisted this was only the remnant of an ancient weather-cock, but there are unbelieving people everywhere.



was not a carriage to be seen in that neatly-paved serpentine Rue de Clairefontaine, in which, of a fine autumn afternoon in the good times of the late Duke, the local quidnuncs had often counted as many as a couple of dozen vehicles, come in for shopping, and drawn up in a long *queue* outside MM. Blanchemelle and Camisole's, the linen-drappers, or Madame Bavolet's, the *modiste* from Paris. MM. Blanchemelle and Camisole and Madame Bavolet had always prided themselves upon keeping pace step for step with the fashions of the capital, and it was certainly to their credit that their bills were, if any thing, rather heavier than those of the Rue de la Paix; but, alas! where were they and the fashions now? MM. B. and C. were advertising cotton-checks cheap, and a humble placard in Madame Bavolet's window informed you that bonnets were to be had within "first style" for fifteen francs! It is curious what a single blow with a dragoon's sword can do. The unsuspecting pimple-nosed trooper who cut down Monsieur le Duc, had at the same stroke ripped open the money-bags of a whole borough, dispersed the denizens of some score of mansions, and mowed away the prosperity of twenty square miles as completely as if it had been so much grass. I need not tell you how popular he was, this pimple-nosed trooper, in Hautbourg; but I think he would have spent a pleasant quarter of an hour if the municipal council could have had the dealing with him for fifteen minutes in private. Nevertheless, I am bound to say there was some one against whom public opinion was yet more incensed than against him, and that was the new landlord—the new Duke of Hautbourg. After all, the dragoon had acted in ignorance; he was a brute, who was paid to do his work; and as for the Monsieur Bonaparte who had paid him, why, you see, he had become Emperor since, and so the less discussion about him the better. But what was to be said for a man who had come into a million francs a year, a colossal estate, a magnificent name, and who yet hid away in some hole-and-corner foreign town, and never condescended to show himself? I ask you, what was the good of being a Duke, if one did not stand forth and show one's self? The law ought to put a stop to dukes who did not show themselves. Their being suffered to hold land was nonsense; it was immoral, and the sooner they were compelled by statute either to relinquish their money or to spend it like gentlemen, the better it would be for everybody. Such were the discourses that were uttered in Hautbourg; and if you would like to hear what else was said about the new and mysterious owner of Clairefontaine, you have

only to step in and listen to the conversation held one evening after a very sorry market-day at the *table d'hôte* of the chief hotel in the place.

It was at that critical moment in the repast when the boiled beef has been removed, and when the company are waiting, silent, to see what is coming next.

Farmer Toulmouche, wizen and small—a fine specimen of a French farmer nourished on lean pork and red wine—poured himself out half a tumbler of *ordinaire*, diluted it with water, and mournfully ventured upon an observation.

"I never see such a market-day in all my life," he said. "This very day three years ago I sold twenty beeves—no more nor less. To-day I sold never a one."

"Nor I," dismally echoed Farmer Truchepoule, an agriculturist of rather bigger calibre. "Never a one."

"Oh! don't let's talk of past times," protested M. Scarpin, the local bootmaker, dejectedly. He had come to dine at *table d'hôte* to raise his spirits a little; for trade had not been very brisk at home that day, and Madame Scarpin, according to the wont of lovely woman, had made him bear the penalty of it.

"No, don't let's talk of past times," assented M. Ballanchu, the seedsman, with a sigh; but he instantly added, "When I think of that Duke skulking away like this, and allowing every thing here to go to rack and ruin, *par tous les cinq cent mille diables*, it makes my blood boil."

M. Ballanchu was a fat man, and when his blood boiled, after an invocation to the five hundred thousand devils, his countenance reddened and was ferocious to behold.

"Of what duke are you speaking?" asked young M. Filoselle, the commercial traveller, whetting his knife against his fork with a view to the roast veal which Madelon, the servant wench, was just then bringing in. This was only M. Filoselle's second visit to Hautbourg. On both occasions, he had found a prodigious difficulty in screwing orders out of the "beggary" town, and he saw no reason whatever for standing on ceremony.

"Why, the Duke of Hautbourg, to be sure," answered M. Ballanchu in astonishment. "Whom else should I mean?"

"Ah, yes, I remember," proceeded M. Filoselle, trying the edge of his knife on his thumb. "You did nothing but talk about him last time I was here. Well, hasn't he turned up yet?"

This levity disgusted M. Scarpin, the bootmaker, who communicated to his neighbor, M. Hohepain, the tax-gatherer, that those Parisians were growing more and more

bumptious every year. Unfortunately, this remark was lost upon M. Hochepain; for, besides being deaf, he was at that moment immersed in profound speculation as to who would get the veal kidney.

It was Farmer Follavoine, the replica picture of Farmer Toulmouche, who undertook to answer the traveller.

"Turned up!" he rejoined bitterly. "No, and never likely to. Why should he turn up? His agent collects his rents for him regular; and so long as them's all right, I don't suppose he's going to care much whether us here goes to the deuse or not."

"I know I shouldn't — not two pints," remarked M. Filoselle pleasantly.

"Do you take stuffing?" called out M. Duval, the landlord, from his end of the table.

"I should think he did; he takes every thing," ejaculated the stout Madelon — the person alluded to being M. Hochepain, the tax-gatherer.

"If I were you," said M. Filoselle, shaking the pepper-pot over his plate, which was by this time full of roast, and grinning approval at Madelon's sally, — "if I were you, I shouldn't sit down and pull faces all the year round, as you seem to be doing. If you want to see your Duke back again, why don't you — Madelon, my angel, the bread — why don't you draw up a petition and have it off to him with a deputation?"

"What good would that do?" asked M. Scarpin contemptuously.

"Not much, I am afraid, *mon pauvre* M. Scarpin, if it was you who headed the deputation; for your Duke might think the jaundice had broken out here, and people who are rich don't like the jaundice; but if you sent somebody with a more cheerful face on his shoulders, something might come of it. After all, though," pursued the collected M. Filoselle, "it depends on what sort of a man your Duke is. In my experience, there are dukes and dukes. I once knew a duke who was no higher than Madelon's waist there, *par exemple*; he wasn't so stout. We travelled together on board a steamboat going down the Rhine — you don't know, the Rhine, M. Scarpin? It's a splendid river, *couleur café au lait*, with a bordering of sugar-loaves on each side. The duke was standing abaft blowing away at a cigar. Said I to him, 'Monsieur le Duc, it is the mission of great men to patronize the arts and manufactures. I am travelling for three world-famed houses: one in the drapery way, another in the musical instrument line, and the third in the wine-business. I also take subscriptions and advertisements for two newspapers — one democratic, the

other conservative. If you will honor me with an order for a flute, and put down your name as subscriber to one of the papers, you will encourage native industry and promote the development of journalism.'

"'Monsieur,' he replied dryly, 'I am not a great man. I don't play the flute, and I think that journalism is a great deal too much developed as it is;' and with this he turned on his heel. *Ah, diable!* that's what I call a sharp duke; and if yours is like him, I agree with you, it wouldn't be much use petitioning. But" —

"Go to, saucy *farceur* from Paris!" interrupted M. Ballanchu wrathfully. "You're all of you alike with that cursed habit of sniggering at every thing. I tell you it's not a matter to laugh at, that a whole town should be going on to ruin, because a crotchety old man, who has had all the good blood in him poisoned by that infernal city of yours, chooses to hide away and hoard up the gold he ought never to have inherited. I tell you, we country-folk whom you Parisians turn up your snub-noses at are a precious sight better than you. Do you hear that, young whippersnapper? Bad luck to you, one and all!"

"Hear, hear," chorused Farmers Toulmouche, Truchepoule, and Follavoine, who had an unmitigated contempt for Parisians. They had never seen Paris, either of them, and didn't wish to.

M. Filoselle was not the least abashed. He had just finished his veal, and was occupied in mopping up the gravy in his plate with some bread-crumbs. This operation completed to his satisfaction, he raised his eyes towards his interlocutor, and said, "Monsieur the Seedsman, my birthplace is not Paris, but Dijon. I first saw the light in the city renowned for its mustard, and I beg you to observe that my nose is of the aquiline order of architecture. As for the old gentleman with the crotchets, who had his good blood poisoned in Paris, I should like to hear something more about him; for he must be an interesting phenomenon to study."

M. Ballanchu growled.

"Come, come," interposed M. Duval, the host, in a spirit of conciliation, for he had tact enough to see that his fellow-townsmen, finding himself unequal to a wordy war, might have recourse to some other means of asserting rustic supremacy, — "come, come, gentlemen, don't let us have M. le Duc interfering with our dinner. He's done us enough harm without that."

"I should think he had, confounded radical!" grumbled M. Ballanchu, still eying M. Filoselle threateningly.

"Radical?" echoed the commercial trav-

eller, catching up the word, and laughing from ear to ear. "There, my good Monsieur Seedsman, didn't I tell you he must be a phenomenon, this old man. *Peste!* you don't suppose it's every province in France that begets radical dukes."

"No, and a good job too," roared M. Ballanchu. "And this one would never have been what he is if his nephew had had five minutes' time before dying to disinherit him. Clairefontaine wasn't made for such as he — a wrong-headed, obstinate, canting Jacobin."

There was a stiff old half-pay officer of the name of Duroseau dining at the *table d'hôte*. He had been too much absorbed as yet by the process of mastication to take any part in the conversation. (His teeth were false, and he was obliged to eat slowly to prevent them coming out.) But now, having laid down his knife and fork, and noticing the puzzled look on the commercial traveller's face, he said gruffly, — "Young man, you must have heard of the ex-deputy, Manuel Gerold?"

"Of course I have, captain; he was one of the first speakers in the old Assembly under the Republic and poor King Pear.\*

I heard him speak once in the House of Representatives. Thunder! Monsieur Ballanchu, your voice was nothing to his. But what of him, captain?"

"Well, young man, it's he who is now Duke of Hautbourg."

M. Filoselle, who had not been brought up at court, and ignored a good many maxims of dinner-table etiquette, gave a prolonged whistle.

M. Duroseau went on, not sorry to have taken the "forward young jackanapes" aback.

"At the time when you saw Monsieur Manuel Gerold, under the late King's reign" (Captain Duroseau laid an emphasis on the words *late King*. He was not a Bonapartist; he had fought under the Dukes of Orleans, Nemours, and Aumale in Africa, and would have been glad to cut off M. Filoselle's ears for calling Louis Philippe King Pear) — "At the time, I say, when you saw M. Gerold, his proper title was Count de Clairebourg; but he has always been a Republican, and never called himself otherwise than by the family name — Gerold. He is the uncle of the Duke who was killed by — by — ahem! — in 1851. He was locked up at the *coup d'état*, but let out as soon as it was found that he was his

nephew's heir. At present he is living in Brussels."

Captain Duroseau, having delivered himself of this concise biographical summary, deemed he had contributed his ample share towards the general fund of conversation, and turned his attention towards a piece of Gruyère cheese.

"*Tiens, tiens,*" muttered the commercial traveller, who had become a little pensive, "that tall man with the gray hair and the eyes like lanterns, who set me all aglow when he let fall those words about liberty and justice — that man is Duke of Hautbourg! And you call him a canting Jacobin, M. Ballanchu. Do you know what we called him in Paris? We had surnamed him *l'honnête Gerold*."

"He was a Republican, sir," said Captain Duroseau, looking up from his cheese. The captain admired honesty as much as any man, but he would not allow that it could exist amongst Republicans.

"I don't care that — what you called him in Paris," retorted the seedsman, snapping his fingers energetically. "I only know this much, that it was a bad day for us all down here in Hautbourg when the property up at Clairefontaine yonder fell into the hands of a man who had such cursed mean notions as to how a landlord should spend his money. Let a man be what he likes, say I, so long as he's poor; but when he's rich, and a duke, why then let him show people what a nobleman is, and throw radicalism and all that pack of nonsense to them as have need of it."

This sentiment seemed so perfectly in accordance with the spirit of practical wisdom, that the three farmers, the boot-maker, the host, and the tax-gatherer burst into a cordial "Ay, ay, well said." Of course, the tax-gatherer had not heard a word, but his idea was that somebody's health had been proposed, and as the seedsman followed up his remarks by draining his glass dry, he, the tax-gatherer, did likewise. The only two who did not join in the applause were the half-pay captain and the commercial traveller. The former muttered dryly that he did not see what change of fortune had got to do with change of politics, and the latter simply asked: — "Does this M. Gerold, this new Duke of Hautbourg, do nothing for the poor of your town?"

"Poor, sir! who cares two figs for the poor?" replied M. Ballanchu, always foremost in the van. "Who ever said a word about the poor, I should like to know? Do you suppose because a man sends ostentatiously twenty thousand francs a year to be distributed amongst a parcel of cripples and old women, I and my fellow-tradesmen are

\* *Le Roi Poire*; literally, King Pear — his Majesty King Louis Philippe. The sobriquet was much in vogue between 1830 and 1848; it was an allusion to the shape of his Majesty's head. Happy the king whose enemies can find no worse nick-name for him than King Pear.

any the better for it? Perhaps you think I can pay for my dinner by telling our host there that M. le Duc has put a thousand napoleons into the poor-box? Ask M. Duval." This sarcasm, emitted in a tone of derisive scorn, obtained an immense success. M. Duval thought it was one of the most delicate flights of wit he had heard for many a long day, and inwardly blamed himself for the unjust estimate he had formed of M. Ballanchu's mental powers. As for the three farmers, Toulmouche, Truchepoule, and Follavoine, they reflected that this seedsman was assuredly a strong head, who would one of these days do something in politics.

A little jealous of his compeer's triumph, M. Scarpin, the bootmaker, felt the moment had come for reaping some glory in his turn.

"Now-a-days," said he, "the poor are a great deal too rich; they take the bread off the plate of their betters" —

"Alas! and only leave one the veal!" exclaimed M. Filoselle. "You see," he added pathetically, "we have lighted upon degenerate times. What with radical dukes and wealthy paupers, there is no knowing where we should all go, were it not for the honest sentiments of such men as M. the Seedsman. M. Ballanchu, I admire your theories; M. Scarpin — paragon of bootmakers! — I shall make a note of your observation. But tell me — for I have yet to learn — why your depraved Jacobin lives at Brussels. That part of the mystery has not been explained yet." And the commercial traveller turned towards Captain Duroseau.

"I don't know, sir," replied the old officer, curtly; "M. de Hautbourg's business doesn't concern me." The fact is, in spite of himself, the worthy captain looked upon a duke rather in the light of a superior officer; and he was not best pleased to hear him discussed with so much familiarity by a company of "clod-hoppers" and "counter-jumpers."

"When a man lives at Brussels," exclaimed M. Ballanchu, in a sapient tone, "I say there must be something in it. I know more of Brussels than M. le Duc thinks for. People don't go and live at Brussels unless they have a reason."

"No, that they don't," assented M. Scarpin, mysteriously.

"Then you mean to say?" — insinuated M. Filoselle.

"I mean to say nothing, sir," responded M. Ballanchu sternly. "Only, I'm a man of business, I am; and unless I have proof positive that a man has a good motive for doing any thing, I make it my rule to believe the contrary. This M. le Duc is not

exiled by the Government, he has plenty of money and a house waiting here for him. Why doesn't he come to it? If you can tell me that, I shall be ready to listen to you; but, until you do, you will allow me to have my own opinion." And saying this, M. Ballanchu folded his napkin and pushed his chair from the table.

"Yes, yes," muttered M. Scarpin, likewise laying down his napkin, and shaking his head. "There's something not clear in all this. Why was the Duke kept at such distance by his nephew and brother in past days? Why was he never asked to Clairefontaine? Why did nobody ever hear nothing of him until, when it was found that Monsieur the late Duke having left no will, it was he who was to come into the property? Why does he hide away now without daring to show himself?"

The seedsman, the bootmaker, the three farmers, and the host exchanged meaning glances. To tell the truth, they were a little alarmed at their own perspicacity. Without having the least idea what it was they suspected, each yet felt as though his preternatural acuteness had put him on the scent of a tragic state secret. The most solemn-looking, however, was the tax-gatherer. As he had not caught a single syllable of what was said, his countenance was more mysteriously profound than that of any of the others.

The captain, who disliked tattling, and who besides had finished his cheese, rose and took up his hat to go; M. Filoselle followed his example; and this was the signal for a general break-up of the party. But the commercial traveller, who, perhaps, was used to having the last word, had not the good sense to retire; maintaining that silence which is known to be of gold. Picking up his carpet-bag in a corner of the room, he exclaimed with enthusiasm: "O charming town! remarkable alike for its boiled beef and for the genial instincts of its inhabitants, it pains my heart to leave thee. But say, Ballanchu, we shall meet again; and perchance, next time I come thou wilt purchase of me an instrument of music whereon to pipe the praises of that duke whom now thou abusest; for should he put in an appearance here, O friend! and shouldst thou have the luck to make his acquaintance, I think thou wilt soon discover that, spite of his living at Brussels" (here M. Filoselle judged well to put a prudent distance betwixt him and the seedsman), "he outweighs in honesty both thee and me — ay, and the lot of us, not to speak of the tax-gatherer."

"Talk for yourself, you parrot-voiced puppy," spluttered the red-faced M. Ballanchu. "And the day I buy any thing of

thee, write it down in a book that I've got more money than I want, and have ceased to care about being swindled."

"*Vive l'esprit!*" retorted the undaunted M. Filoselle. "There is but one Duke, and Ballanchu shall be his seedsman. M. Duval, I charge you take care of that man; he is so sharp that I foresee he will cut himself." And with this Parthian shot, M. Filoselle chucked Madelon, the serving-maid, under the chin, threw her a twenty-sou piece, made his obeisance to the company, and vanished.

"*Que le diable l'emporte!*" shouted the seedsman, shaking his fist after him. "And as for that 'honest Gerold' of thine, I fancy thou and he would make a pretty pair." To which observation the whole company for the third time cried assent, M. Hoche-pain this once joining like the rest; for, having caught the two words "pretty pair," he concluded they must refer to a couple of cauliflowers which had figured at the board, and so remarked in confidence to the irate seedsman:—

"Yes, a pretty pair truly, but not quite boiled enough."

\* \* \* \* \*

This dinner and this conversation took place at the Hôtel de Clairefontaine towards the end of September in the year 1854. A week afterwards, day for day, some stir was caused in the hotel by what was no longer a diurnal occurrence, the arrival of three travellers. They had come by the mid-day train, purposed dining, and would, perhaps, stay a night. One of them was an old man of about seventy, the other two looked like his sons.

## CHAPTER II.

### HONEST GEROLD.

Un sacrifice fier charme une âme hautaine :  
La gloire en est présente et la douleur lointaine.

As stood to reason, they were given the best rooms in the hotel; indeed, there was good choice and to spare, for the house was empty. Mlle. Madelon showed them into the yellow drawing-room on the first floor, overlooking the market-place, and lost no time in telling them that the two pictures on the wall facing them as they went in were portraits of Monseigneur the late Duke of Hautbourg and his father—"the owners of this house, if you please, gentlemen." That, over the fireplace, with the periwig, was Monsieur le Marquis, who had been beheaded by Monsieur Robespierre;

and that in the corner there, with the frame in brown Holland, was another member of the Hautbourg family, Monseigneur Jean de Clairebourg, Bishop of Marvault, a holy man, who had done a great deal of good by burning some Protestants. Mlle. Madelon had recited all this so often, that she knew it by heart. She used at one time to turn a pretty penny by pointing out to travellers the identical bed in which Monseigneur the first Duke of Hautbourg had slept on the night of his return from emigration in 1814, before they had had time to prepare his room for him at the castle. Unfortunately, she had rather overdone this, for, finding it paid, and that people liked to sleep in Monseigneur's bed, she had ended by pointing out every couch in the house as having been occupied by his Grace, and had even unwarily put a gentleman of the Filoselle type, who came thrice to the hotel, each time in a different bed, warranted slept in by the great noble. On going away the third time, the gentleman had inquired dryly whether emigration had not imparted somewhat erratic habits to Monseigneur, since he spent his nights going about from bed to bed.

The oldest of the three strangers listened very kindly to the girl's prattle, and the two younger ones seemed amused by it. They were three as handsome faces as any admirer of manly beauty could have hoped to meet. The veteran carried himself erect, and had something in his gait that revealed the old soldier. His hair and beard were both long, however—longer than old soldiers generally allow themselves; for the hair, which was of dazzling white, fell to the shoulders, and the beard half covered the chest. What chiefly attracted one in this old man was the expression of his eyes, which was singularly eloquent and gentle. They beamed upon one, those eyes; and one felt, under their quiet, steady gaze, that they could never have quailed before anybody. The voice, too, had a rare accent of benevolence; it was the voice of a man who thought well of human nature, and had met on his path more good characters than bad ones.

The two younger men were sufficiently alike to make it discernible at a glance that they were brothers. The elder looked three or four and twenty; the other was probably a couple of years his junior. Both had the same eyes—at least, very nearly the same—as the old man, and their faces were like his, bright, open, and intelligent. Of the two, it was, perhaps, the younger who was the strongest, and he also looked the graver; the elder was slighter of build, more graceful, and certainly more inclined to laugh, for scarcely a minute passed but

saw his pleasant features lighted up by a smile. Both were very well dressed — not a common merit in France, where young men are the worst dressers in Christendom — but as traits of character can be gathered from little facts, it may as well be mentioned that, whilst the younger wore a plain black silk cravat tied in a knot, the elder had a black satin scarf, with a cameo pin in it, and, moreover, wore a gold ring.

Between the three men seemed to exist that cordial, trustful familiarity bred of deepest love on the one hand, and of fullest affection, respect, and confidence on the other.

Mdlle. Madelon, though not given to enthusiasm, thought within herself that they were three as nice gentlemen as she had seen for a long while; and proceeded to testify this sentiment by dusting some of the chairs — an operation which she often neglected where less comely strangers were concerned. Having done this, and opened the windows to show “Messieurs” the market-place, and the statue of the Poitiers hero prancing in the middle, she announced that Monsieur Duval would doubtless be up presently to offer his respects; and, sure enough, the words were scarcely out of her mouth, before that gentleman appeared in person.

He was very obsequious; carried a napkin on his arm, as if his house were chock full, and he had done nothing but wait at table all day; and expressed a hope that the gentlemen were lodged to their liking.

“Perfectly, M. Duval, thank you,” said the old man, politely. “But we shall not have occasion to make much use of your comfortable rooms, for my sons and I will be out all day. It is one o’clock now; I think we shall hardly be home before seven; may we rely upon you to get us dinner for that hour?”

“Monsieur may place his entire confidence in me,” replied M. Duval, bowing. (Allow me to notice here how fond Frenchmen are of phrases with the word confidence. An English inn-keeper would have answered, “Dinner will be on the table punctually at seven, sir.”)

The travellers having seen their rooms and intrusted their bags to Mdlle. Madelon, had no further reason for staying indoors, and so followed M. Duval down stairs. The worthy host entertained them with warm praises of himself and his house all the way, and was once more renewing to them his assurance about the confidence and the dinner, when he remembered, just as the strangers were crossing the entrance-hall, that he had forgotten to ask for their names. The French police are always very anxious to know the names of strangers

who stop at hotels, and the instructions given to inn-keepers on this subject are peremptory. No name, no lodging. Besides, M. Duval was curious on his own account to know whom he was harboring. Every thing about these well-looking, gentleman-like travellers, pointed to the presumption that they were not hap-hazard folk.

“I beg your pardon, Messieurs,” he cried, “would you have any objection to put your names on the register?”

The old man appeared a little annoyed, but he said nothing to show it, and followed M. Duval into the parlor, where the host began bustling about to find a new quill-pen, and then laid out on the table that imposing folio register, which has to be inspected by M. le Commissaire every three days. The pages were marked out in columns, and the traveller was requested by printed queries at the top to supply information as to the few following particulars: — Name and Christian Name, Age, Birthplace, Profession or Trade, Motives of present journey, Name of place last visited, Name of place to be visited next, Nature of the Certificates of Identity in the Traveller’s possession; and, lest the traveller should after this feel that he had not said enough, and be disposed to communicate more about himself and his intentions, there was a ninth column headed Observations. The white-haired stranger took the pen from M. Duval, and in a clear, large hand silently filled up the blank spaces both for himself and his two sons; the host keeping at a discreet distance apart the while. When the formality had been gone through, however, M. Duval made a point of deploring the troublesome inquisitiveness of the police, who put gentlemen to so much trouble; and so followed the strangers to the door, very hearty in his apologies as he was in every thing. As soon as they had left the house he returned to the parlor. “Now,” said he, “let us see;” but he had hardly cast his eyes on the register and the bold handwriting, still wet, than he gave a scared start, crying, “Mon Dieu! it’s not possible — no — yet, by heavens! it is, though.” And with one bound he was at the street-door again, his face all aglow with excitement, trying if he could perceive the travellers. But they were already out of sight. They had turned the corner of the market-place, and were gone down the street towards the high-road leading to Clairefontaine.

M. Duval was fain to come in again, but he did not remain in-doors long; and before an hour was over, the whole town of Hautbourg was in as great a state of excitement as he was.

The road to Clairefontaine was a fine

one, and must have borne an animated appearance during the reign of that irrepressible late duke who was so continually cropping up in the conversations of the Hautbourgeois. An enterprising builder had, however, done his best to spoil it by converting a part of it into a suburb of the borough. He had erected on each side of it a number of lath-and-plaster trifles, decorated with the pretentious name of *châteaux* and even *châtelets*, but which looked about as much like the real thing as a child's house of toy-bricks looks like Windsor Castle. There are few things so ghastly as new ruins, and these *châteaux*, castlets, villas, or whatever else they may be called, were all in ruins, not from age, but from want of care. Imagine a band of school-girls decked out smart for a holiday in pink and white, but caught in a good drenching deluge of rain at the day's outset, and standing piteously in the sun an hour afterwards to dry themselves—such was pretty much the idea suggested by the excoriated white plaster on the walls, the washed-out, red tiles, and the shutters denuded of almost every vestige of paint. In point of fact, the houses had never been inhabited, and the builder had gone where many other good builders go—into the bankruptcy court.

The three men walked along, chatting pleasantly, or, to speak with more accuracy, the two younger ones chatted whilst the elder listened. He seemed to have grown a little grave and pre-occupied, and this gravity rather increased than diminished every minute; but he smiled at the bright humor of the eldest of his sons, who, teeming with wit and spirits, found something to say of every object, animate and inanimate, on the road; and he nodded kindly whenever the youngest, less brilliant but more thoughtful, capped his brother's witticisms by some quaint remark, arguing gentleness of mood, and quiet, scholarly perception.

"Where are you taking us to, father?" asked the eldest, smiling; "I begin to think this mysterious pilgrimage of ours is to end on a ruin; every thing we pass is dilapidated. Look at that public-house."

"Our pilgrimage is drawing to its close, Horace," answered the old man, returning the smile; but he added with some anxiety in his tone, "Do you really think the country looks dilapidated? We have met no beggars yet, and I generally make that my test. As to ruined public-houses, why, you know, I do not feel much sympathy for them."

Horace looked around a moment, as if trying to detect a beggar, and, not succeeding, answered, "I really think one only sees beggars in free lands. I have met plenty in Belgium, and when we went to

England last year I saw nothing else; but here"—

"Here one has gendarmes instead," broke in the younger brother quietly; and he pointed to a booted representative of law and order, who was, in truth, the fifth or sixth they had met that afternoon.

They had walked about a mile and a half, and, at this juncture, reached a point where four roads met. A young girl was coming towards them with a basket of eggs on her arm. The old man, who appeared doubtful as to which road to take, raised his hat and said, "Will you kindly tell us the way to Clairefontaine, Mademoiselle?"

"There to the left, Monsieur," she answered; "it's not above ten minutes' walk. See the sign-post."

They had not noticed the sign-post. It said: *Clairefontaine*,  $\frac{1}{2}$  kilomètre; *Clairebourg*, 2 kilomètres; *Boisgency*,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  kilomètres; *Sainte Sophie*, 5 kilomètres.

"Clairefontaine!" muttered the elder brother, and he proceeded to quote what seemed to him appropriate,—"Fons Bandusiae, splendor viro, cras donaberis hædo. Are we bent on sacrifice, father?" he added, laughing.

The old man laid a hand on his shoulder. "You shall answer that question for me yourself, my dear boy, when we come back this evening," he replied, with a gravity which surprised his two sons. "Perhaps, indeed, Clairefontaine is to be our Bandusian Fount," he continued, gently, "and maybe there will be a sacrifice there. I accept your omen."

The party walked on in silence for the next few minutes—the father still grave, the sons both wondering—until a turning in the road brought them abruptly in view of the lodge-gates of Clairefontaine, with the princely avenue of elms beyond, and the turreted mansion, half palace, half castle, closing the prospect grandly in the distance. The old man's face seemed to light up with quick emotion, and the two young men gave a murmur of admiration. "Certes, it was a splendid sight. Clairefontaine House in its lonely majesty, bathed in the purple rays of the autumn sun, and surrounded by its cortège of stately trees, still looked like a queen in the midst of her court."

"What a thing is wealth," sighed Horace. "And to think that the owner of this paradise is perhaps some Cræsus who finds the country slow, and spends three-fourths of his time in Paris cooped up in a set of rooms scarcely bigger than that lodge yonder."

"You will have the opportunity of inspecting your paradise at leisure," answered his father, "for this is the end of our jour-

ney." And the gate being now reached, he pulled the bell-chain hanging on one side of it.

Out hobbled the old crone whose acquaintance we have already made. She was used to the application of visitors desirous of seeing the grounds, and the more of such came the better she liked it; for a visitor generally represented at least a forty-sou piece. These, however, were not ordinary applicants, as she soon found. When the three strangers had been admitted within the massive bronze gates, forged all over with scutcheons and ducal coronets, the elder drew a letter from his pocket and handed it to her.

"It's from Monsieur Claude, the agent," he said.

The old woman fumbled in her apron for a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, put them on with a shaking hand, broke the seal of the letter, and read these lines:—

"MADAME MABOULE, — You will please to show the bearer of this all over the castle, the rooms, stables, picture-gallery, or, should he prefer visiting the house alone, you will give him the keys.

"J. CLAUDE."

"Oh! Monsieur, then, is the gentleman whom Monsieur Claude was speaking about the other day?" exclaimed Madame Maboule, throwing a searching but respectful glance at the strangers. "He said a gentleman was coming as would want to see the castle—a friend of Monseigneur the new Duke's, I believe?"

The old man bent his head affirmatively; his sons opened their eyes; they appeared not to know in the least whither their father was tending, nor what was his motive in bringing them there.

Madame Maboule, dismal at her best, but more than usually so when she stood in the presence of the great, whimpered a hope that Monseigneur was quite well, and inquired whether the Messieurs would go up to the house alone, or whether she should accompany them.

There was a moment's deliberation on this point; the stranger evidently wished to save the worthy old soul the mile's walk up the avenue, but Madame Maboule protested with wheezy fortitude that the walk was nothing to her, and that the Messieurs would lose their way in the apartments if she was not there to guide them.

"But perhaps," added she, with an inquiring glance at them all, "the Messieurs have been here before?"

"I was here once," answered the old man, in a hurried tone, "but it was a long time ago; things have changed since then:

I might not know my way now." And to compensate the honest crone for the trouble she was going to take, he slipped a *napoleon* into her hand.

"I am sure Monsieur is very generous," was the grateful and somewhat bewildered acknowledgment; and the next minute the four set off in company, the old woman leading the way, and the three gentlemen walking slowly, not to tire her.

As nothing so much resembles one old mansion as another old mansion; and as, moreover, the description of abandoned drawing-rooms and bedrooms, silent libraries and picture-galleries, old-fashioned furniture muffled up in chintz coverings, and old-fashioned beds overhung with imposing dusty canopies, can scarcely be expected to interest any save very enthusiastic admirers of bric-a-brac, we will not follow the strangers in their inspection of the Castle of Clairefontaine, but, leaving them to the care of Madame Maboule, wait for them outside on the open terrace, overlooking what had a few years before been one of the finest gardens in the province. The walk up the avenue had taken about three-quarters of an hour, protracted as it was by constant halts on the part of Madame Maboule to point out this or that feature of interest in the landscape. Here was a bench on which Monsieur the late Duke would often sit to read his paper. There, on that rising plot of ground, a belvedere erected by Monsieur the Marquis, who was very fond of looking at the stars with a telescope, eighty years ago; there, again, in that by-path, if the Messieurs would step out of their way and see, was a marble urn erected over the burying-place of a pet dog by Madame la Marquise, wife of Monseigneur who was imprisoned in the Bastille by Louis XIV.—a very beautiful lady, gentlemen, and much respected by the King. But of all the objects, that which had most fascination for the old woman, was a beech-tree that had been used to hang a Jacobin on. The man had led the sacking of Clairefontaine in 1793 and had retired to live in peace for the next twenty years. But in 1814, when the exiled family returned, the peasantry had dragged him out and strung him up in the night opposite the new Duke's windows—a delicate piece of attention that had greatly touched Monseigneur, and seemed both natural and proper to Madame Maboule. In the castle itself the party staid more than a couple of hours. The old man appeared desirous that his sons should see every nook and corner of the house and miss none of its accumulated splendors. Madame Maboule lent herself readily enough to his whim. She took them from floor to floor, from



room to lobby, lobby to hall, hall to chapel; turning creaking locks with her jingling keys, and explaining every thing as if she was speaking about a city of the dead, and showing things that had long ceased to be understood by a modern generation. What more garrulous than an old woman who has lived five-and-sixty years on an estate, and has room for nothing else but the memory of its past glories in her venerable head? Every foot of carpet within the doors of Clairefontaine House was so much consecrated ground to Madame Maboule. She talked about her departed masters with a plaintive, wobegone, motherly sort of affection; and, throughout all her utterances, rang like the burden of a dirge—a lamentation over that new Duke whom she had never seen and whose absence she could not understand. The young men listened to her with much the same kind of silent attention which one bestows upon an aged monk showing one over a cathedral. Their father spoke very little during the whole two hours. Only once, when they were in an upper room—which, in old times, had been a nursery—he smiled a rather sad smile, and, pointing to a picture of a very young child hanging in a corner, asked who that was. “That, sir, is the present Duke of Hautbourg,” answered the old woman; “it was taken nigh upon seventy years ago.”

At last the inspection was over; the desolate castle had been visited from roof to basement, and the three strangers with their guide stood together on the terrace.

“Well, Emile,” asked the old man of his youngest son, “what do you think of all we have just seen?” And he looked with a rather curious expression into the lad’s grave, blue eyes.

“I think there is a skeleton in that house like in many poorer ones, father,” replied the young man, pensively.

“What skeleton, dear boy?”

“The skeleton that prevents the new Lord of Clairefontaine from coming and living here. Do you not think, father,” added he, with concern, “that there must be very bitter memories attached to some of that splendor, if the new Duke of Hautbourg persists in keeping away like this?”

The father made no immediate answer, but a few moments afterwards he turned to the old lodge-keeper and said softly, “We will not trouble you to stay with us any longer, Madame Maboule. I and my sons are going to sit down for a little under yonder oak, and perhaps we shall walk about in the park for a short while afterwards.”

Madame Maboule dropped a courtesy. “Very well, sir,” she answered, in her usual dolorous tone. “When you want to return

you have only to follow the avenue straight, and I shall be down at the lodge to open the gate for you.” She courtesied for a second time and hobbled away slowly.

The three men walked towards the oak, which stood in the centre of a grass-plot just beyond the outskirts of the garden and commanded a view of almost the entire park. Was it an undefined presentiment of something strange about to be told them, or merely hazard, that kept the young men silent as they went? anyhow, silent they were: and save but for the chirping of the birds overhead, and the muffled sound of their own footsteps in the long grass, there would have been a complete stillness all around them as far as the eye could reach. There was a wooden form running round the rough trunk of the oak, and all three sat down on it.

“Can you guess why I have brought you here?” inquired the father, addressing both his sons.

They shook their heads.

“Why, father?” they asked.

“I wish to tell you a story,” he said, affectionately taking a hand of theirs in each of his, as they sat on either side of him. “Should you like to be told what is the skeleton in Clairefontaine, Emile? And you, Horace, are you curious to learn how people may live cooped up in rooms no bigger than the park-lodge, and yet be more at ease than in a fine palace like this?”

Emile smiled slightly.

“Then there is a skeleton,” he rejoined; and Horace added, grimly, “I was complaining that one met nothing but beggars in free countries. One may remark, also, that there seem to be a deplorable number of skeletons in rich houses. I have never been over a castle, but somebody had poisoned somebody else in it, or put him down a well, or thrown him out of the window.”

“Yes; but there is nothing of that kind in my story,” interrupted the old man good-naturedly. “It is not a legend of murder or mystery. It is—well, I can hardly call it an every-day story, but you shall hear and judge.” And, seeing both young men attentive, with their eyes fixed on him, he began his recital in a quiet, simple tone—much as he would have told a fairy tale to young children.

“Once upon a time,” he said, “there was a very rich nobleman, who lived in a house such as this, we will say. He was a kind-hearted, well-meaning man; but he came in troublous times, when people’s minds were excited by the remembrance of many centuries of oppression, and, when at last there was a rising of the down-trodden against their masters, he paid, as we must often do here below, for the sins of some of

his ancestors. Let it be recorded that he perished nobly. In dying he left two orphan sons (their mother was dead some years before) — the elder seventeen years old, the younger nine. In the ordinary course of things, the elder must have succeeded his father, and become his brother's guardian; but there was so much exasperation against the nobility throughout the whole country, that the boys would not have been safe had they remained in France. So both of them went into exile. The eldest, who had assumed the family title of marquis, became an officer in the Prince of Condé's army at Coblenz; the younger, who was a viscount, was taken as page of honor into the household of a royal princess, the Countess of Provence — the same, who, a few years later, died in London, calling herself, and called by the Royalists, Queen of France. I have no need to remind you what came eventually of the Prince of Condé's army. The officers and soldiers who composed it were brave men, but they were bearing arms against their country, and somehow experience shows that victory does not remain long on the side of those who are not in the right. After a series of reverses they got dispersed. Some went and accepted service in foreign armies; others — and, probably, the wisest there — started for America, to try and build up their fortunes once more in a new world; and others, again, emigrated to England, where they formed a large, but not very united, nor always very reasonable, colony of titled refugees. Amongst those who went to England were the young Marquis and his brother. They had been completely ruined by the Revolution, for it had been decreed by the Convention that those who emigrated should forfeit their estates; so that all the two boys had to live upon was the money raised by means of some of the family plate and jewels, which a devoted servant had been able to rescue from the wreck of the property, and had contrived to smuggle out of France. Those were hard times for lads brought up in purple; but the two brothers would have been ungrateful to complain, for many were twenty times worse off than they. There were plenty of dukes and counts who became music, fencing, language, or drawing masters. One or two set up as small shopkeepers. There was one (he became a peer of France afterwards) who took to carpentering, and very successfully, too. Unfortunately, however, this adversity, which should have read a lesson to many of those whose lack of wisdom had been the cause of the Revolution, seemed not to profit them much, and there was little else in the refugee colony but bicker-

ings and disputes, teacup storms and intrigues, plans for invading France and restoring the old régime, and anathemas of all sorts against the Liberal principles of the Revolution. It was this that first pained the younger of the two brothers, and, by degrees, estranged him from the Royalist cause. As he grew old enough to think for himself he could not see that the Revolution had been such a crying wrong as those of his own caste would have had him believe. Of course the excesses of the Revolution, the blood-orgies of '93, were a wrong — a cruel wrong, and they have been dearly expiated by Republicans. But one should separate the good from the bad in pronouncing judgment; — one should draw a difference between the Revolutionists who asked only for freedom and fair laws, and who fell victims of their moderation, from the few sorry villains who — But let us speak mercifully of them, too," exclaimed the old man, humbly. "Who shall presume to judge motives: Death has passed over good and bad alike now!"

He paused for a moment, and then resumed: "The boy, the young Viscount I mean, had struggled a good while with himself before daring to admit even to his own conscience that he was disposed to think differently from those who formed his habitual society. You see, his father had been put to death unjustly, and it required some time before he could perceive that it was no more just to hold the Republicans as a body responsible for this crime than it would have been to make his father responsible for the misdoings of those brother noblemen of his whose follies had driven the country into rebellion. Perhaps if the language of the exiles in whose company he lived had been more tolerant than it was, their conduct more dignified, and their apparent aims more patriotic, he would never have been brought to reason in this way, and would have remained a Royalist to the end, like his elder brother. But, with few exceptions, the conduct of the refugees was not dignified; and if they felt any patriotism, they seldom showed it in their schemes. To a boy of seventeen they seemed a feeble, prejudiced, selfish body of men, whom misfortune had neither chastened nor instructed; and it was impossible not to reflect, after hearing them talk, that should they ever recover their power they would inevitably lose it again before long through sheer force of obstinacy and wrongheadedness. In youth we quickly fly from one extreme to the other, for when we lose our faith in one set of principles we conclude that those most diametrically opposite to them must be the right ones. The young exile, feeling his confidence in and his admiration for the-

Royalist party growing less and less every day, began gradually to take up with Republican views. This was at the period when Bonaparte was shaking all Europe with his Italian victories, and when the military glory of France shone with a lustre it had never possessed before. It was difficult not to feel one's heart thrill at the report of battles in which Frenchmen fought and won against treble odds; and though the refugees and the English papers with them sneered at these victories and declared they were not true, yet such denials were so evidently prompted by jealousy that they rather added to than diminished the enthusiasm with which every fresh success was received by those who really loved their country. One day — this was in the year 1801 — the young Viscount took a resolution. He was grown tired of an exile's life, and saw nothing to tempt him in the prospect of dangling indefinitely about the mock court of the Prince who styled himself Louis XVIII. Summoning up all his courage — and I can assure you it needed courage — he informed his brother of his intention of returning to France and enlisting in General Bonaparte's army. The Marquis had never bated a jot from his Royalism, and the thought that any one of his family could ever turn Republican had not crossed his mind even in dream. He started at his brother's communication as if he had been shot. The thing seemed to him like blasphemy. A brother of his to turn renegade and serve in the ranks with those who had murdered his father! Why this was as bad as being accomplice to a parricide! He became white with dismay, seized his brother's hand, and entreated him to declare that it was all a hoax, a joke, or any thing save the truth. But the younger brother held good. He had been prepared for some consternation, but he felt so sure of his own motives, he knew so well that hatred against his father's murderers burned within him as strongly as ever, that he attached little importance to the horrified expressions of his brother, and even hoped to convert him. He pleaded his case with all the boldness he could muster. There could be no offence to their father's memory, he showed, in serving their common country. It was not Robespierre or Marat he was going to fight for — those men were dead — he was simply going to be a French soldier; and, in short, he adduced all the arguments which he had uppermost in his heart, and which his conscience has ever since — yes, ever since — assured him were right. The Marquis, however, refused to be convinced. Chivalrous and unbending in all points of loyalty, he considered desertion of one's party a

crime too heinous for excuse. He was shocked: he cast his brother away from him like a viper; and from that day up to his death he would never consent to see him nor speak to him again."

The old man became silent a moment. He was a little pale; but he proceeded in an unbroken voice: "Party spirit ran high in those days; I believe men could hate each other more intensely than they do now. It was a time when the words Royalist or Republican put barriers between men which no strength of family ties could break down; and once a man had left one camp for the other, the feud between himself and his former friends was something deep, lasting, and absurdly violent. In this case the younger brother did not hate the elder, God knows! but the elder bore an eternal grudge against the younger, and — But let bygones be bygones, and may those with whom pardon lies forgive as fully as the younger brother has forgiven. I don't want to make my story too long," continued the old man; "so shall only say that Fortune dealt kindly with the boy who enlisted in Bonaparte's army. He soon rose to be an officer, was at the end of three years a captain, and might have gone much higher had he chosen to remain in the service. But in becoming a soldier under Bonaparte he had sworn allegiance to the Republic which then existed, and had not foreseen that an Empire was going to be established. When the First Consul converted himself into an Emperor, he tendered his resignation, which was not immediately accepted — for officers and men were wanted just then for the Austerlitz campaign; — but on the declaration of peace, when it was seen that he would neither accept promotion nor the legion of honor, he was allowed to retire; and so went to settle in Paris, where, by the help of pen instead of sword, he cut out for himself a new career, which was blessed, perhaps, beyond his deserts — certainly, beyond his expectations. The elder brother, meanwhile, prospered in a different way. While still in exile he contracted a wealthy marriage — in fact he married the daughter of an English slave-trader — and, in course of time, came back to France with the Bourbons, was made a duke, bought back with his wife's money the family estates, which had been sold after confiscation as 'national property,' and died with many honors upon him, unwavering to the end in his allegiance to the dynasty whose ups and downs he had shared. Now what should you say," asked the old man, looking at both his sons alternately, and consulting their eyes with some signs of emotion, — "What should you say if, by a turn of fate, the elder brother's only son, having died childless, the younger

brother — the Republican — had one day unexpectedly become inheritor both of the dukedom and the redeemed estates? — "Try and consider," he went on in a voice that, to his sons, sounded almost pleading, so modestly appealing was it, and so earnest, — "Try and consider what was the position of this younger brother. He had never looked for this inheritance and never desired it. It came upon him through a calamity, which was itself the result of a political crime, and this alone might have afforded an honest man excuse enough for refusing the fortune, seeing that it is difficult to hate crime as we should when it has helped to make us rich. But there were other reasons. From the moment when he had parted from his brother, the Republican had, boy and man, pinned his faith to one code of principles. Rightly or wrongly, these principles did not allow of his wearing a title, and so he had discarded that of viscount, which he originally wore, for his own plain family name. It was under this name that he was generally known, and had conquered such small reputation as he possessed; and it was under this name that, by the confidence of a Radical constituency, he had been elected three or four times over to the legislature as an advocate of liberal opinions — that is, of freedom at home and of slave-abolition in the colonies; for, remember, we are speaking of a few years ago, and the abolition of slavery was one of the chief party-cries of French liberals before '48. Now, under all these circumstances," concluded the speaker slowly, "could this man who refused to wear a viscount's title with consistency assume a dukedom? or could this man, who was an opponent of slavery, accept an estate that had been bought with the money of a slave-trader?"

There was a moment's silence — it was only a single instant — and then both sons rose together, their heads uncovered and their eyes glistening.

"No, father," faltered the youngest proudly, but he was too much moved to say more: and the eldest added, his voice gushing with admiration and enthusiasm, "But you had no need of dukedom or estate, father, to make your name illustrious."

The three men shook hands; and in that warm, silent grasp, and the few words just recorded, was the father's act of self-denial — his refusal of wealth and rank for conscience's sake — ratified by his children.

This, by the way, was the first the two young men had ever heard of their family history. They had known their father only as Manuel Gerold, a Republican, who was one of the most esteemed leaders of his party, and whose unaffected integrity and simple, undeviating fidelity to principle had

earned for him, at the hand of friends and foes alike, the enviable surname of "the honest Gerold." There are certain Frenchmen who have the knack of making Republicanism peculiarly hideous, but Manuel Gerold was not one of them. The Republic, such as he dreamed it, would have been a very fine thing; unfortunately, it had this drawback, that before it could be established every man must have put away the leaven of unrighteousness and become transformed into an enlightened philanthropist, devoted to schemes of intelligent benevolence. I do not think that in the worthy gentleman's projects of commonwealth any provision at all had been made for houses of correction — much less for such functionaries as a hangman, gendarmes, or turnkeys. He had a way of talking about schools which gave one to understand that crime was but the result of ignorance, and that if men only knew how to read, write and count, the necessity for coercive establishments would disappear. I suppose it would have been hardly fair to remind him of the remarkable number of individuals who turn their knowledge of the three rules to account by subtracting funds from their neighbors' pockets in order to add them to their own. With all his naiveness, however, and his humane belief in the innate virtues of mankind, Manuel Gerold was no mere dreamer. He could be shrewd when he chose, and he had such a hearty scorn for all that was mean or false that he had more than once taken adversaries aback by the crude, energetic way in which he assailed abuses. There was something in him both of the soldier and of the priest. Very mild in his habitual moods; very indulgent also, and chivalrously amiable, he could light up at the recital of a wrong, and pour out words with the same startling vehemence which the hermits of old must have used when they preached the crusades. Having, as he thought, nothing to expect of his family, he had brought up both his sons to the notion that they were humble *bourgeois* who would have to fight their way through life as he had had to fight his; and it had been one of his most constant lessons to them that if a man only remained honest he must end by being prosperous. This was a deep-rooted belief with him; it was not an empty maxim. Had he been well read in his Bible — which I am sorry to say he wasn't — he would have quoted the noble lines: "I was young and now I am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging their bread." But being a Republican Frenchman (and one who held himself for a free-thinker, though he invoked God's blessing twenty times a day)

he simply quoted from his own experience, and said that he had known many men, honest and otherwise, but that he had never met with an honest man who had had cause to repent of his integrity. Educated in this precept, the boys had grown up to be, above all, manly and straightforward; they shared their father's loathing for every thing that was not true and frank, and both bade fair, if nothing came amiss, to follow him step for step in his republican opinions. France is not one of those countries where every right-minded person has a peerage on his table, so that it had been easy enough to keep them in ignorance of their father's family connections. A good many of Manuel Gerold's friends did not so much as suspect that he had any relationship to a ducal house; and as for the general public, the tendency towards self-depreciation is a failing of such decidedly limited growth amongst Frenchmen, that a man who duba himself plain *bourgeois* is taken at his own valuation without either difficulty or questions. It should be added, now, that their father's communication did not much bewilder the young men. A few days before, Manuel Gerold, who had been living with them at Brussels ever since the *coup d'état*, had informed them quietly that he intended taking them to France "on a business visit," and once at Clairefontaine, he had told them his secret in the abrupt and simple way just shown. But the feeling brought uppermost in their minds by the recital was not one of very great surprise or excitement. At twenty-four and twenty-one, rent-rolls and dukedoms have not the same peculiar significance in our eyes which they acquire in after life. Somehow the young men thought it quite natural that their father should turn out to be a duke; just as natural that he should refuse to wear his title; and the most matter-of-course thing possible that, having inherited an estate with a slur of ill-gained money on it, he should put it away from him without hesitation. But this did not prevent their admiring and feeling proud of his disinterestedness; for noble traits have the faculty of moving us, even when we are best prepared for them.

There was a long pause, after which the father, who had been looking at his sons with great joy and tenderness, said: "And what should be done with an estate which everybody refuses?"

Emile was the first to speak.

"It has been bought with the price of human beings," he answered gravely; "let it be sold and the money employed in redeeming slaves, or in helping to abolish slavery in America."

"Yes, yes;" assented his brother eagerly.

Manuel Gerold had produced a piece of folded parchment of unmistakably legal appearance. "For the last three years," he observed, "the estate has been masterless; that is, an agent has collected the revenues and paid them into different charities; but here is a deed I have had prepared which makes over the whole property to both of you jointly; so that now the disposal of it is in your hands."

Horace took the parchment and was for tearing it up instantly: "This shall be the sacrifice of which we spoke this morning," he exclaimed, laughing, and his brother approved, adding: "Yes, let us tear it up, it can do no good with us."

"Stay one moment," interposed Manuel Gerold, and he quoted the two lines that have been placed at the head of this chapter. They were from a new play of Ponsard's, very popular at that time. "Let me advise you to wait and not act under impulse, dear boys," he continued; "the merit of your sacrifice will be greater if it is accomplished after reflection. I did not like to speak to you of this before you were of an age to pronounce whether you thought as I did about this unlucky heritage; but I would not have you pronounce too quickly. Think whilst you may, in order that there shall never be any regret at having acted too hastily."

"But what should we think about?" asked the elder brother in a tone of surprise, and looking almost reproachfully at his father. "Can Emile or I ever think differently about this matter to what we do now?"

"Heaven grant not! my brave boy," replied the old man, smiling to re-assure him; "but I was considering the satisfaction you yourselves might feel in after-life, when, looking back upon these times, you could remember that you had given up a fortune, not on the spur of a generous moment, but calmly and deliberately, like men. This is what I was going to propose to you; let the title-deed remain in your hands for a stated period—say four or five years. During that time the revenues of Clairefontaine shall be devoted to whatever charities you wish; and if at the end of the term you have kept steadfast to your resolution, then let Emile's proposal be adopted, and the whole heritage return to its true owners, the unfortunate slaves with whose freedom it was bought."

It required some little time before either of the brothers could be brought to see the advantages of this scheme; indeed it is doubtful whether they ever did see the advantage of it at all; but the younger, to

please his father, whose real motives he divined, pretended conversion. Emile perceived that the true wish in Manuel Gerold's heart was that his sons should not be influenced by his presence in the decision they took; he desired that they should act for themselves when he was not there to see them, so that the merit of the sacrifice should be entirely with them:—"Very well, father," said the young man placidly, "let us wait for a while; it can make no difference."

The elder brother, however, did not give in so soon. He had opened the parchment and cast his eye mechanically over it: the deed was as formal as possible; it had been prepared before witnesses and signed, so as to be unimpeachable in a court of justice; it divided the estate into two equal parts, Clairefontaine Castle, with the domain of the same name and all the land situated in the town of Hautbourg, being the share of Horace; and the freeholds of Clairebourg, Boisgency, and Sainte Sophie, together with the family mansion in the Faubourg Saint Germain in Paris, being that of Emile. To satisfy the requirements of the law the Republican had been obliged for once in his life to sign with all his titles, and his name figured as Manuel Armand Gerold de Clairefontaine, Duke of Hautbourg and of Clairefontaine, Marquis of Clairebourg and of Sainte Sophie, Count of Boisgency, and Baron Gerold of Hautbourg. Horace Gerold, after looking at all this, folded up the document again and said in a tone of seriousness rather unusual to him: "I think we shall do better not to wait: our duty in this case is so plain that delay seems almost a wrong. Besides, five years! Who knows what may happen in that time?"

"But there is no absolute necessity for your making the term five years," replied Manuel Gerold cheerfully. "Make it what you like; say two years, or three years. All I want is that you should put yourselves through an ordeal sufficient to show that you are not afraid of the temptation. For, believe me, if you remain firm in your purpose for some reasonable time, it will be an encouragement to you in many and many trials to come; it will convince you that those sacrifices which seem hardest to the world are not hard to those who have a little common patience to help them."

This settled the matter. The moment it became a question of proving that he felt no fear of wavering, Horace Gerold would have agreed to wait twenty years. He looked about him at the park, with its desolate expanses of untrimmed lawn and wild-growing trees; at the old mansion opposite him, sad and untenanted; and this prospect, the lonely beauty of which had

charmed him but a few hours before, now seemed to him chill and repelling; later he felt as though he could have refused a thousand such castles one after the other, and so, putting the parchment in his pocket, he said quietly: "Let it be five years, father. This is the 20th September, 1854; on the 20th September, 1859, we will destroy this deed and make a new one. I shall remember the date."

"Amen," answered Manuel Gerold fervently.

It was now about five o'clock; and the great resolution being taken, the father and his two sons walked leisurely in the direction of the lodge-gates, where Madame Maboule had promised to be in waiting for them. On their way they talked on the subject which naturally engrossed the young men most for the moment, the history of the Hautbourgs past and gone. Manuel Gerold spoke of the time when he had last seen that park, some sixty years before, on the night when his father was arrested as a Royalist, and he himself and his brother were spirited away through a side-door, whilst five or six hundred peasants, led on by a local ragamuffin, attacked the castle and plundered all they could find in it. He remembered the dismal coach that had come to fetch the Marquis away, the gloomy flashing of the gendarmes' swords in the torch-light, the exulting yells of the rabble at seeing the nobleman manacled like a felon, and the desperate, heroic attempt made by a few of the tenants, who loved their master, to rescue him from the hands of his captors. It was by the efforts of these tenants that the Marquis's two sons had been saved from being arrested like him. The tenants had used force, for the boys wished to go with their father, and Manuel Gerold recollected a rough, devoted farmer who had gagged him with his hand to prevent him screaming. Then there was talk of the bloody assize that had been held in the old town-hall at Hautbourg by one of Robespierre's judges; of the destruction of all the monuments and memorials that could in any way recall the great family of Clairefontaine, of the pillage of the church, and its conversion into a granary, and of the sale of Clairefontaine by the Republican Government to a Radical attorney, for a few thousand francs. When the family returned at the Restoration this attorney, who had already made a colossal fortune, asked for five million francs to surrender the estate, and it was generally credited that he would have insisted upon double had he not had strong reasons for apprehending that the Duke would have him out and shoot him. "See there," continued Manuel Gerold, stopping and pointing with

his stick to a moss-covered grotto, of the sort without which no great park was complete a hundred years ago. "I remember as if it was yesterday my poor father sitting there in powdered wig and ruffles, and teaching me to spell words out of the 'Gazette de France' on his knee; the 'Gazette' was the great paper then; it used to reach us twice a week with news from Paris, and was about the size of a pocket-handkerchief." These reminiscences of past times, called up tenderly by the father, listened to religiously by the sons, occupied the party until they reached the end of the avenue, where Madame Maboule, civil and melancholy, was standing with the gate wide open to let them pass.

"Good afternoon, gentlemen," she cried, tremulously, "and may be, sir, if you see Monseigneur, you will tell him how glad we should all be to see him. The place looks like a church-yard now there's nobody there; it does indeed."

Manuel Gerold muttered a few kind words in returning her salutation; and, once outside the gate, turned round to take a last look at the old house and park. His face was perfectly calm, but he said in a low voice, and with an affectionate wave of the hand towards the place where he and his fathers had been born, "Good-by to Clairefontaine; it came honorably into our hands eight centuries ago; our ancestors will not reproach us for having surrendered it honorably."

With these words, the father and his sons walked away, going back, by the same road as they had come, to Hautbourg. On the way, Horace and Emile, by tacit agreement, refrained from speaking any more about Clairefontaine or the past, and their talk was entirely about the immediate future. Both brothers had graduated as licentiates of law, the elder at Paris in 1851, the younger at Liège in 1854, and it had been decided that they should go to Paris at the opening of term in October, to enter themselves at the Bar. Their visit to Clairefontaine and the things they had heard there did not in any way modify these arrangements; but the young men were anxious to induce their father to accompany them, and he had hitherto refused, alleging his intention of returning to Brussels, where most of his old Republican friends were living. They now tried again to shake his determination, but to little purpose.

"No, let me return into my voluntary exile," he said, gently. "My time is over now; if I could do any good I would come; but the Liberals of to-day have need of younger and stronger soldiers than I."

Emile and Horace both protested against this view, and the discussion was carried on

until the three had reached those remarkable lath-and-plaster villas of which mention has been already made. At this point they noticed that for the last couple of hundred yards or so the people they met had eyed them curiously, and been peculiarly sedulous in the matter of hat-raising. The lath-and-plaster dwellings extended about three-quarters of a mile out of the town, and the nearer they drew to Hautbourg, so much the more did the number of the passers-by increase. Every one of them without exception stared, stood aside, and uncovered his head.

"It's evident that we are not *incognito*," observed Horace Gerold; "this comes of putting down one's name in hotel books." A gendarme was coming towards them at that moment; he stared, too, and made a military salute.

"Ah," said the Republican, "that settles the point. It is not Manuel Gerold they are bowing to, but the Duke of Hautbourg." He stopped a moment. "I had not counted upon this," he muttered. "I had hoped that most of the people here were ignorant that Gerold and the Duke were one. It would not do to have a triumphal entry into the town; suppose we retrace our steps and walk about till it gets dark."

But it was too late. On looking round it was perceived a throng of people, to the number of some twenty or thirty, had gathered in the rear, and were following at a respectful distance — not demonstrative, but attentive. Simultaneously another throng, three times as big, loomed on the horizon in front. The fact is, Monsieur Duval of the Hotel de Clairefontaine, startled out of all reticence and composure by the discovery that he was giving hospitality to none other than the famous Duke, who was both the despair and the stock subject of conversation of everybody in the borough, had spent his afternoon in going about from house to house, and proclaiming the stupefying piece of news that "He, yes He, had at last come; and was going to dine at the hotel at seven!" The intelligence in so far as regarded the dinner, was not deemed of vast purport, but the other fact about "*his* having come," flew through the town like wildfire, and was speedily exaggerated into the most positive assertion that "*he* had come in company with his entire household," the footmen and butlers composing the aforesaid household being most circumstantially described. There were of course people in the crowd who soon declared themselves in a position to give particulars as to the way in which *he* had come. One had seen the open barouche and four drive up whilst everybody was at luncheon; another had especially noticed the two omnibuses behind

containing the family; a third, declining to keep so important a secret to himself, avowed that he had talked with Monsieur le Duc half an hour, and that Monsieur had told him he was coming to live at Clairefontaine forthwith. Please imagine the sensation!

Immediately, and as though by magic, Hautbourg had become transformed. Silk dresses, buried in lower drawers ever since the fatal "three years ago," were drawn out in hot haste; windows were thrown open and decked with glazed-calico tricolor flags, showy tablecloths, or any other artistic thing that came first to hand; children had their faces washed, much to their disgust, and were hastily sheathed in Sunday clothes; Monsieur le Curé, abruptly apprised of the news whilst he was taking his afternoon nap, rushed with the inspiration of wisdom to the cupboard, where his best cassock hung, and speedily appeared in the market-place, clean-shaven, brushed, with a missal under his arm, and with gloves on; as for Monsieur le Maire, Messieurs of the Municipal Council, and Monsieur the Beadle, they might have been desried, towards six o'clock, standing three deep round the door of the Hôtel de Clairefontaine, silent, august, and prepared to distinguish themselves.

But what shall be said of Monsieur Ballanchu the seedsman, Monsieur Scarpin the boot-maker, and Monsieur Hochepain the tax-gatherer? These three, like honest tradesmen as they were, announced themselves ready to forgive and forget. Monsieur Ballanchu had bought, on credit, a new pair of double-soles from M. Scarpin, and was giving them an airing in honor of the auspicious occasion; Madame Scarpin in scarlet cap-strings was standing at her door, and had supplied herself with two pocket-handkerchiefs, one *utile*, the other *dulce*, i.e. fragrant with Eau-de-Cologne, to be waved when the HE and family should pass. As Madame Scarpin was not the only matron, by a hundred or so, who was standing at her door, with cap-strings hoisted and pocket-handkerchief in reserve, you may readily conceive what a fine spectacle the town presented at about the time when HE was expected.

At last (it was about 6.30 P. M., and expectation had begun to assume that spasmodic form which reveals itself in treading on one another's toes, and kicking each other's shins) — at last the report flew: "HE comes! HE comes!" It was quite true; there he came, a little astonished, but perfectly dignified, and walking between his two sons. All three were bareheaded, for everybody was shouting as if he or she had only five minutes more in which to

shout on earth. And the hats and the handkerchiefs — how they shook and fluttered! And the shrill piping of the children, how it rent the air, with the cries of *vive Monsieur le Duc*; whilst, with a mighty thunder like that of a bull of Bashan, Monsieur Ballanchu, purple in the face, was roaring *vive le Duc de Hautbourg et Monsieur le Marquis*. Monsieur le Curé, meek and benign, stood up on tip-toe to obtain a better sight, and raised his shovel-hat high above him as if in apostolic benediction; Monsieur le Maire, Messieurs of the Municipal Council, and Monsieur the Parish Beadle, yelled as nobody had ever heard them yell before; Monsieur Duval, the hotel-keeper, had dressed himself as if for a state-ball, and was smirking radiantly on his door-step, with Mademoiselle Madelon behind, effulgent in a clean gown, a piece of ribbon round her throat, and a brooch somewhere on her bosom. To crown all, and complete the *tableau*, the local force of six policemen and twelve gendarmes were drawn up in a symmetrical semicircle, and seemed disposed to salute. You see, they had not yet received advices from Paris that this Monsieur le Duc was a "Socialist." They simply took their cue from Monsieur le Maire, and, seeing him enthusiastic, were enthusiastic, too, as became good officials.

### CHAPTER III.

#### "VOX POPULI VOX DEI."

THE cheering, saluting, and pocket-handkerchief-waving would have been all very well but for this fact — that they could have no influence whatever on the resolution of the three gentlemen whom they were intended to honor. The eldest of the three bowed very coldly and gravely: the elder of the two brothers, hailed, for the first time in his life, as "Monsieur le Marquis," appeared disposed to treat the matter as a joke; the younger brother kept as serious as his father, and, if any thing, looked contempt for men who could make such servile fuss about people who were perfect strangers to them. It never struck this ingenuous youth that M. Ballanchu, whilst he bellowed with veins distended and blood-shot eyes, had five and twenty unpaid bills ornamenting the inside of his desk at home; and that poor M. Scarpin, for all his zeal in screaming himself hoarse, was sick at heart in fear of approaching bankruptcy.

The noise and excitement continued long



after the Gerolds had entered the hotel, and had been ushered by the obsequious M. Duval into the yellow drawing-room, now blazing with wax-candles and extemporized floral decoration. In the middle of the room stood the table, spread with snowy cloth, and decked with all the available silver plate in the establishment. M. Duval had even gone the length of borrowing an *épergne* from the local jeweller; and the local jeweller, in consenting to the loan, had merely stipulated that one of his shop-boys should be allowed to serve at table disguised as waiter, so as not to lose sight of the precious piece. It was not that he mistrusted Monsieur Duval, but in a town where everybody has become poor, you know, it is best to take one's precautions.

Monsieur Duval had flattered himself upon creating a favorable impression. He had spent ten minutes over the bow of his white tie, twenty in the hands of his neighbor the barber, who had put his hair into curl, fifteen in superintending the toilets of his subordinates, to see that they were as splendid as himself, and forty in planning and arranging with his own deft hands the adornments of the yellow drawing-room as above. It should be added, that he had also invested two twenty-franc pieces in the purchase of the flowers which made such a fine show, and that the *menu* he had devised for M. le Duc's dinner was a thing unique in provincial experience.

The first words of Manuel Gerold — or of M. le Duc, if you like it better — fell upon him; however, like a bucket of iced water upon a glowing fire; for, whilst the crowd were still shouting below, and whilst he, M. Duval, smiling from ear to ear, was assuring his guests that the dinner would be served up in an instant — but that meanwhile, if “Monseigneur”\* would allow it, M. le Maire of the town, and M. le Curé, together with several other of the officials, would feel honored by being allowed to pay their respects — the Duke, after a moment's whispering with his sons, drew out his watch, and asked a little stiffly: “Monsieur Duval, at what time does the last train start for Paris to-night?”

Poor M. Duval, utterly disconcerted at this surprising question, stood stock still, and looked blankly at his interlocutor.

“The last train for — for Paris?” he stammered. “Why, surely Monseigneur does not think of going away to-night?”

At any other time Manuel Gerold would have answered kindly, and stated his in-

tentions without reserve; but the stupid acclamations of the crowd, and the cringing, almost dog-like attitude of the persons whom he had seen during the last half-hour, had put him out of humor, so that he replied with a curtness altogether out of keeping with his usual manner: —

“I cannot say what my plans are; but I beg, Monsieur Duval, that you will not call me Monseigneur any more. If you have ever heard any thing about me, you must be aware that I am a Republican, and that, consequently, I admit no differences of rank, but such as exist between men who are honest and those who are not.”

As a Frenchman, M. Duval understood this speech at once. He bowed silently, and staggered out of the room — professedly to fetch a time-table, virtually to hide the confusion and chagrin which were overwhelming him with a sense that all was lost, and that the new Duke was indeed a Radical!

As soon as he was gone, the Gerolds held a rapid conference, and decided that they must go that night, and not risk any interviews with mayors or vicars. There was nothing in Manuel Gerold of the charlatanism of Republicanism; and he felt not the slightest ambition to proclaim aloud to the world why it was that he forsook Clairefontaine. His sons thought as he did; the demonstrative homage of the worthy *Hautbourgeois* had too pecuniary a ring in it to cause them any elation. They had seen in their father, a few years before, carried in triumph by several thousand electors, who cheered lustily, not the name or the purse, but the man; and the present exhibition seemed to them humiliatingly mean in comparison.

M. Duval re-entered in a few minutes, woe-stricken in demeanor, and freighted with a time-table. Behind him he left the door open, and on handing the table to Manuel Gerold, appeared to hesitate timidly, as though he had something to ask, but dared not. Outside on the landing there was a sound of whispering, with slight shuffling of feet, and down below in the street, the cries *vive Monsieur le Duc! vive Monsieur le Marquis! &c.*, were being uttered enthusiastically and perseveringly as ever.

Manuel Gerold took the time-table, marked the look of trepidation on the host's rueful face, and was about to ask the reason, when he was spared the trouble; for before M. Duval had said a word, the door left ajar was thrown wide open, and in sailed Monsieur le Maire, M. le Curé, as many of the Municipal Council as could squeeze in after him, M. Ballanchu the seedsman, M. Scarpin the bootmaker, M.

\* Monseigneur simply means “my lord,” and was used before 1789 in addressing all very great noblemen. Nowadays it is reserved for princes of the blood, and church dignitaries, archbishops, bishops, &c. Loyal tenants, however, like M. Duval, will still call their noble masters “Monseigneur.”

Hochepain the tax-gatherer, and some half-dozen more *ejusdem farinae*, inquisitive, awe-stricken, and respectful. To prevent all chances of rebuff, M. le Maire had brought with him his daughter, a damsel of fifteen summers, attired in white as if for confirmation, and armed with a bouquet about a yard in circumference. The whole procession advanced a couple of steps into the room, and bowed like a single counsellor. Then the damsel, being nudged forward by her father, stepped out reddening, and presented the bouquet.

It was to the old man she offered it. He had risen, together with Horace and Emile; and, as the child came to him, he laid a hand kindly on her head.

"To whom is it you are giving these flowers, my child?" he asked: "to Manuel Gerold, or to the Duke of Hautbourg?"

This question had not been foreseen in the full-dress rehearsal of the performance which Monsieur le Maire had gone through down below with his daughter, so the excellent magistrate immediately hastened to the rescue. He had mentally prepared a short, but effective speech, treating of the importance of the nobility in the social scale, the dangers of anarchy, the Imperial dynasty, the salutary blending of liberty and order, and the price of wheat—topics all bearing more or less on the return of the new Duke. Losing his presence of mind, however, at the critical moment, he began his remarks by an allusion to the Crusades, addressing Manuel Gerold as "*Monsieur le Duc, fils illustre d'une race de Croisés.*"

The Republican at once cut him short.

"Mr. Mayor," he said gently, but firmly, "I am sincerely thankful, both to yourself and your fellow-townsmen, for the friendly greeting you have given my sons and me to-day; but I should be glad to learn that this welcome of yours has not been offered under a misapprehension. If you have greeted me simply as the descendant of a family long connected with your town, then thank you most gratefully again and again; but if you have welcomed me under the belief that I was coming to assume any new character, I think it right to tell you that certain private arrangements which I am compelled to make will prevent my ever standing towards you in the same relation as did my late nephew."

Here were all the new-born hopes of Hautbourg nipped in the bud. There was a long murmur, with whispers and sighs from everybody, except M. Hochepain the tax-gatherer, who, to the indignation of his brethren, cried energetically: "Hear, hear," under a wrong impression. He was sternly called to order by M. Ballanchu,

and, whilst this little episode was being enacted in the hindmost ranks of the assemblage, near the door, M. le Curé, brushing his shovel-hat nervously with the sleeve of his cassock, and beaming unutterable entreaty through the glasses of his honest spectacles, trotted forward and undertook to plead the cause of his sorrowing parishioners. He was a worthy ecclesiastic, and made the most of his point. The sense of diminished church-dues was so strong within him that he would have been eloquent in the face of a king, how much more then in the presence of the man with whom it lay to restore prosperity to the borough, and so, indirectly, to replenish the coffers of the parish church. He quoted Maccabees, the Book of Ezekiel, and the parable of the man who buried his talents in a napkin. He marshalled in array St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine of Hippo, and St. John Chrysostom. He adduced the sufferings of St. Simeon Stylites on his pillar, St. Laurence on his gridiron, and St. Andrew of Utica, who perished by fish-hooks. And all this he did with so much unction and zeal as to excite the secret envy of the Mayor, the wonder of the Municipal Council, the admiration of M. Ballanchu, and, indeed, of everybody save that unlucky M. Hochepain, who, being always out of his reckoning, and having still present to his mind the angry rebuke of the seedsman, took it upon himself to exclaim, "No, no," just when such an expression of opinion on his part was most unfelicitous. Happily, M. le Curé was too deep in his own harangue to hear, for he was just then closing with a masterly peroration, depicting the horrors of famine and the remorse which must necessarily overtake the rich man who allowed his poor brethren to die of hunger. This last form of appeal was only ventured on as an extreme resort, for, as a general rule, M. le Curé had much greater faith in the salvation of rich brethren than of poor ones. He had had occasion to notice that it was the rich who went oftenest to church and put most into the plate.

A great pity that so much eloquence should have missed its effect, but it did. Manuel Gerold's words in answer were few, but they sounded to the good priest like so many thwacks with a cane. The Republican observed that he had never contemplated letting anybody die of hunger; that his annual subscription of 20,000 francs for the poor of Hautbourg would be continued, and even added to if it were insufficient; that he would instruct the agent not to press for rent those who really could not afford to pay, and that if any person in Hautbourg had met with misfortune which it was possible to relieve by extra donations, he would

do his best to help him. This said, however, he made one of those coldly polite inclinations of the head by which kings, cabinet-ministers, and people who are bored, intimate their wish to end an interview. The hint was taken with dismay by the curé, with consternation by the mayor and council, with suppressed mutterings by MM. Ballanchu, Scarpin and Co., and with philosophical indifference by M. Hochepain, who, having never understood from the first why he had come up stairs, was not much surprised to find himself going down again.

Everybody bowed on backing out as on coming in, and it was the crest-fallen M. Duval who held the door open. Three-quarters of an hour after the desponding deputation had made its exit, the strangers themselves were gone. Finding that a train left for Paris soon after eight, they had galloped through M. Duval's munificent dinner, or, rather, through a quarter of it, and so stabbed the professional self-esteem of that honest innkeeper, as well as dashed down his hopes. Not even the 500-franc note with which the Republican generously paid him his bill was enough to make him forget the accumulation of so much bitterness in a single day.

Manuel Gerold and his sons set out on foot to go to the station, but though the market-place and the streets were still crowded, they were not cheered this time as they had been an hour or two before. The ill news brought down from the yellow drawing-room by M. le Maire, M. le Curé, and authorities, had spread pretty fast, and as the three gentlemen appeared at the door of the hotel, first one individual, then another who had caught sight of them, proffered a cat-call or derisive whistle—(remember, darkness had set in, and it was easy to whistle without being seen). These isolated marks of disfavor were like the single squibs that are fired off at the commencement of a firework entertainment. Gradually, they increased in number, in strength, and in noise, just as the sky-rockets that come after the squibs. "*A bas les Républicains!*" "*A la fosse les Socialistes!*" "*A la lanterne les Rouges!*" Such were the amenities which this lively mob delivered. In a minute or two the cries, cat-calls, whistles, and kind wishes had become general. Everybody—man, woman, and child—contributed his or her oburgation to the cheerful total, and the three Gerolds were eventually escorted to the station by a closely-packed rabble, screaming, yelping, hooting, and barking, "*A la fosse!*" "*A la lanterne!*" "*A la potence!* (gibbet)" &c. One gentleman, thinking probably that this exhibition of feeling was scarcely forcible enough for a

practical age, snatched up a stone close to the station and threw it at the group (it struck Manuel Gerold's shoulder), exclaiming, "*Sales Proscrits, pouah!*"

"Ignoble dogs!" cried Horace Gerold, facing round with his fists clenched in indignant scorn.

But his father gently withheld his arm. "Must we take angry men at their word?" he said. "These don't mean what they say."

"*C'est égal,*" muttered the young man between his teeth; "this is my first lesson in democracy, and if all crowds are like this"—

"But they're not," put in his father, earnestly.

#### CHAPTER IV.

ANNO DOMINI M.DCCC.LIV.

WHILST the three Gerolds are being whirled along towards Paris, each musing in the strain peculiar to him on the ups and downs of popular favor, it will not be amiss if we take a bird's-eye survey of the year 1854, which was to be a starting-point in the lives of the two young men.

In 1854, France had already been rather more than two years in the enjoyment of its Second Empire, and people who had sworn eternal fidelity to past dynasties, had had abundant time to forget that such had ever existed, that here there were three great topics of interest in the Parisian papers: the Crimean war, the sensation drama, *Les Cosaques*, by MM. Arnault and Judicis; and the Cholera. Lord Raglan and Marshal St. Arnaud, Admiral Hamelin and Rear-Admiral Dundas, MM. Arnault and Judicis (afore-mentioned), and Dr. Trousseau (on account of the cholera), were seven popular men. Monsieur Jullien—who had organized some promenade concerts in London, and composed a quadrille called the *Allied Armies*, during the performance of which some warriors in red and some others in blue were to be seen emerging from behind a curtain playing a medley of *Rule Britannia* and *Partant pour la Syrie*—was also a popular man. For the first time since the invention of printing the term *braves alliés* was being advantageously substituted for that of *Milords Godam* in the current literature which treated of Englishmen, and there were pictures of French Zouaves warmly embracing Scotch Highlanders in most of the engraving-shops of the capital. The

nick-name for His Majesty the Emperor Nicholas was in London "*Old Nick*," and in Paris *le Gros Colas*; there was likewise a sobriquet for Prince Menschikoff, who was styled *le Prince Thermomètre* — a somewhat mysterious joke, but which was generally understood to mean that the Russian captain's chance of thrashing *les braves Français* depended much more upon Generals Frost and Snow than upon any proficiency of his own in the science of warfare.

In order to diffuse a healthy patriotism amongst the lower orders, the Imperial Government had taken care that there should be no lack of seasonable reading, and husky gentlemen patrolled the Boulevards selling songs and pamphlets, in which one found many unpleasant things about Ivan the Terrible, who cut off the ears of his courtiers, and about Alexander, who sent French prisoners of war to work in the mines of Ural, and fed them on tallow-candles. For the more intellectual portion of the community who might have been sceptical about the candles, the publishers of the late M. de Custine had brought out a new edition of his famous Russian book; and for clubs and cafés, where the frivolous abound, M. Gustave Doré, then budding into fame, had prepared a comic and pictorial "*Histoire de la Sainte Russie*," in which the death of every alternate Czar, by poison, was most graphically and instructively portrayed. To tell the truth, this war was a godsend, for, if there had been no dead and wounded to harangue about, no Czar to cut jokes at, and no Muscovites to pummel, who knows but that the French might have turned their ever-lively attention to that new Constitution, which had just been elaborated, and devoted some of their superfluous energy to knocking it to pieces? But one thing at a time is enough for Frenchmen — happily. They only pull Constitutions to bits when they have nothing else to do; and in 1854, being fully employed with other talk, they let the Constitution alone. Besides, most of the workmen who were good at knocking to pieces, were out of the way. MM. Bianqui and Barbés, the heroes of the 15th May insurrection in 1848, were under lock and key. MM. Ledru Rollin and Louis Blanc were across the channel. M. Victor Hugo, majestic and gloomy, was inspecting the ocean from the top of his Belvedere at Guernsey, and defiantly muttering verses from his "*Napoléon le Petit*." MM. Thiers and Guizot, possibly not over-satisfied with the pretty day's work they had accomplished when they smashed the Orleans throne into splinters in fighting between them for the keeping of it, were indulging in solitary reflections — the one in his own home at Val

Richer, the other in Germany. M. Eugène Sue, the Socialist in kid-gloves, great at depicting virtue in corduroys, was fretting away the last years of his life at Annecy; and Dr. Raspail, another revolutionary hero, who eschewed kid-gloves but believed in the panaceal properties of camphor, was smoking cigarettes of that compound in retirement at Brussels; M. Pierre Leroux, the bogey of French mass-going matrons, had disappeared, no one knew whither, taking his materialist doctrines with him; and Generals Cavaignac, Lamoricière, and Changarnier — those modern Curiatii, outwitted and conquered by the Imperial Horatius — were chewing the cud of bitter meditation — very bitter — and shooting partridges to console themselves.

As for the minor operatives in the knocking-to-pieces trade, there were eleven thousand of them at Cayenne, two thousand at Lambessa, and five thousand in Africa. M. Frédéric Cournet, who had commanded the barricade of the Faubourg du Temple in June '48, had lately been killed in a duel near Windsor by his brother revolutionist, Barthélemy who had commanded the barricade of the Faubourg St. Antoine; and Barthélemy, himself was giving fencing-lessons in London, pending the time when he should be hanged at Newgate for murdering his landlord and a policeman. Thus, opposition, liberalism, and all unpleasantness of that sort, had been happily removed. Such Radicals as remained in Paris held their tongues, and it was only at the Bar (where, amongst others, a young barrister of twenty-eight, named M. Emile Ollivier, was remarkable for the vehemence of his Republicanism) that one could ever hear any thing like a subversive speech, delivered generally in defence of some miserable journalist brought up for punishment.

To give a civilized look to the new Empire, and make every thing regular, there was a Corps Législatif, composed of two hundred and sixty members, and a Senate, composed of a hundred and twenty; who wore, the Deputies, blue swallow-tails with silver braiding, and the Senators, black swallow-tails with gold ditto. The cost of them to the nation for salaries, refreshments, &c., was about half a million sterling. They debated on an average sixty hours a session with closed doors, not a single reporter being suffered to disturb them; and, as they were all invariably of one mind, their deliberations were characterized by that blessed harmony which should always prevail in Christian assemblies. The daily press, in 1854, was no longer — heaven be praised! — the turbulent, unmanageable thing it had been a few years previously. There were three journals

—"Patrie," "Constitutionnel," and "Pays"—which sang the praises of the Imperial dynasty every evening, and though, it is true, there were three or four more that declined to join in this concert, yet these were ill-conditioned papers, which were perpetually getting into trouble, and which M. de Persigny, the Home Minister, doctored with whip and thong, like a liberal and wise statesman as he was. As for the "Charivari" and kindred prints, they cut their capers under difficulties. Imagine a quadrille where each of the dancers has a piece of chain and a ten-pound shot riven to the ankle of his right leg.

Architecturally speaking, Paris was not yet the vast Haussmannville it has become since; but the trowel-wielding Baron was just come into office, and pickaxe, hod, and brick-cart were already on the move. Every willing citizen who was not required for exterminating Russians found employment to his fill in demolishing dwelling-places.

It was known amongst tax-payers that the Rue de Rivoli was going to be prolonged, so that there might be one straight line from the Place de la Concorde to that of the Bastille; that a new Tribunal of Commerce was to be built in the heart of the once pestilential Cité, where policemen of old had never ventured without quaking; that the old Théâtre Lyrique and Théâtre du Châtelet were coming down, and that new ones would soon be erected in their stead, furnished with all modern appliances of luxury, and with actually room enough in the stalls for people to sit in. That M. Alphand, the new Prefect's chief engineer and *fidus Achates*, had taken the Bois de Boulogne in hand, and was bent upon transforming it into a fairy garden, which it should need only five-and-twenty million francs a year to keep in order: that the plans of five new barracks, three new boulevards, seven new mairies, four new squares, and seventeen new churches, were being prepared on a right royal scale, regardless of expense; and that to pay for all these things there would, in all probability, be more taxes next year. And yet such is the admirable effect of the whip and thong in subduing the human mind and making it supple, that nobody grumbled much; though M. de Rambuteau, who had been Prefect of the Seine under Louis Philippe, remembered the time when the whole city had uttered piercing cries, and groaned aloud and predicted national ruin, because he, M. de Rambuteau, had insisted upon building the wretched meagre street which bears his name.

Truly a great change had come over men in the course of three years, and one could

notice the effects of it everywhere. If you entered a café in the year 1854, you were no longer deafened, as 1848, '49, and '50, by the astounding clamor of citizens discussing across a table whether Cavaignac was a greater man than Lamartine, or Lamartine a greater man than Cavaignac, or M. Odillon Barrot a greater man than either. From prudential motives the investigation of these interesting problems had been momentarily shelved. There were gentlemen to be seen in the cafés, who walked very erect, and had small eyes, and were particularly affable in conversation. Unfortunately, it had been remarked that those who confided their political impressions to these engaging strangers were seldom long before they were summoned to explain them at greater length to M. le Juge d'Instruction at the Palais de Justice, and this had no doubt something to do with the extremely taciturn, not to say unbrotherly demeanor, which men evinced towards each other in Parisian cafés during the year '54. There was a good deal of the same sort of danger in clubs. It was not the most agreeable thing in the world to be suddenly interrupted in a mantle-shelf conversation by a gentleman with a firm beak-nose and a red rosette in his button-hole, who would suddenly spring up from an opposite end of the room and say, with grim courtesy, hat in hand, "I think I heard Monsieur express an opinion adverse to the *coup d'état*, in which I had the honor to participate. Will Monsieur be so obliging as to name a friend?"

In nine cases out of ten, your adversary was one of his Majesty's officers, grateful for past favors, and hopeful by display of zeal to merit a continuance of the same. He would take you out at six o'clock A.M. to the Bois de Vincennes, and there run you through with amazing adroitness and satisfaction. Under the circumstances, it was as well to avoid political topics, and to talk in a lyrical strain, either about the glories of war or the ravages of the cholera—taking care to add, however, if one selected this last subject, that the cholera was not half so fatal under the present as under preceding reigns, as was triumphantly proved by the fact that M. Casimir Péreire, Prime Minister of Louis Philippe, had died of cholera; whereas, no such catastrophe had ever befallen a minister of Napoleon, nor was likely to.

But let us not be unjust towards the Imperial régime. One was not entirely confined for conversation to the war and the cholera; there were other topics upon which one might venture with more or less safety. For instance, one could speak of the monster Hotel du Louvre, which was

being completed, much to the dismay of surrounding hostilities; of the barn-like building in the Champs-Élysées, which was destined for the International Exhibition of 1855, and which (this in a whisper, for fear of beak-noses) contrasted unfavorably with Sir Joseph Paxton's edifice that adorned Hyde Park in '51; of the beauty of the new Empress, Mdle. Eugénie de Téba, and of the intention attributed to her of importing the *mantilla* at Court; of the fashions of the year, — to wit, frogged coats, striped trousers, and curly-brimmed hats for gentlemen; three-flounced dresses, hair à l'*Impératrice*, and spoon-bill bonnets for ladies; of the thin face of M. Magne, Minister of Finance, and the plump face of M. Baroche, Minister of Justice; of the beard movement raging like an epidemic in England, and the consequent depression in the razor-trade; of Mdle. Anna Thillon, the star of the Opéra Comique, of whom the critics unanimously wrote that she looked like an angel and sang like a peacock; of Dr. Véron, deputy for Paris and editor of the "Constitutionnel," his renowned *cordon bleu* Sophie and his legendary shirt-collars, more stiff and formidable than the shirt-collars of any other man of letters from Dunkirk to Bayonne; of M. de Tocqueville, the witty and thoughtful, who was writing his book, "L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution," and M. Augustin Thierry, the scholarly, who was busy at his "Histoire du Tiers Etat;" of the Académie Française, grave and learned body, which professed to ignore Béranger, and which, in the course of the year, mourned five of its members — Tissot, the *savant*; Antonin Jay, the founder of the "Constitutionnel;" Ancelot, the author of "Louis XI.;" Baour Lormian, the translator of "Tasso;" and the polished Marquis de Saint Aulaire, historian of the Fronde; of the price of oysters, which cost ten centimes the dozen more than in '53, and of the scarcity of truffles on the markets of Périgord; of M. Scribe the playwright, whose eternal young widows and colonels were decidedly beginning to be found stale; and of Mdme. Émile de Girardin's new comedie, "La Joie fait Peur" and "Le Chapeau d'un Horloger" (the last two she ever wrote), which all Paris was flocking to see; of Alfred de Musset, whose once brilliant genius was almost extinguished, and of Alexandre Dumas, who was as prolific in novels as ever; of Dumas the younger, whose recent success with "La Dame aux Camélias" was still in everybody's mouth, and of Mdme. Doche, who played the part of Marguerite Gautier in that drama so touchingly, that the ladies in the boxes used to sob, whilst the gentlemen in the stalls would cough, and

— when nobody was looking — dash their hands across their eyes; of Italy and Italians, notably of Silvio Pellico, who was dying at Turin, broken down by his imprisonment in the Spielberg, and of Daniel Manin, ex-dictator of Venice, who was giving music-lessons in Paris; of a new sort of glove lately imported from England, called dogskin, generally voted hideous, but worn nevertheless because it was British; and of the exorbitant price of articles in Russian leather, owing to the cessation of trade with the Czar's dominions; of M. de Villèle, the celebrated Prime Minister of Louis XVIII., who died during the year, unremembered and almost unknown, from having spent a quarter of a century in retirement (*sic transit gloria mundi!*); of M. le Comte d'Aberdeen, who was Premier in England, and Monsieur Franklin Pierce, the orator, who was President of the United States; of certain English words which were making their way bravely into the French language, such as *steeple-chase*, *lunch*, *ponch*, and *high-life*, the latter of which was pronounced as if it rhymed with *fig-leaf*; of the vintage of the year, which was good, and the crops, which were less so; of Alma and Balaclava, Inkermann and Sebastopol, with discussions as to whether one should say *Sebas-* or *Sebas-topol*; of M. de Morney's dinners and Mdme. de Persigny's suppers; of Ravel and Grassot, Bressant and Rachel; of the end of the world, which some French Dr. Cumming had announced as irrevocably fixed for the 13th of June, 1857; and of a new establishment of Turkish baths, which had been inaugurated as a novelty on the Boulevard du Temple, and which a popular journalist, M. Nestor Roqueplan, recommended as a sovereign cure to nephews who wished to get rid of their uncles.

Such, amongst others, were the topics of current talk in Paris in the year 1854, at the time when Horace and Émile Gerold came there to try their fortunes.

## CHAPTER V.

### BOURGEOIS POLITICS.

"WELL, I think we've about done our furnishing," said Horace to his brother, as he stepped back to look at a long row of law volumes which he had been ranging on a book-shelf.

"Yes," answered Émile, "both our studies are in order: the man has finished nailing down the carpets in the bedrooms. I don't see what else remains to be done."

"Where have you put the tin box?" asked Horace.

"Here it is," said Emile, picking up a small tin case from out a litter of torn newspapers, bits of string, empty boxes and wood-shavings that encumbered the floor. "What's in it?"

"Don't you know?" exclaimed the elder, looking at him. "It's that title-deed; I put it there when we came from Clairefontaine six weeks ago."

"Oh!" rejoined Emile, becoming serious, and he added after a moment: "What are you going to do with it?"

"We must find a place for the thing somewhere where we sha'n't be seeing it every day," returned Horace, perplexed. "I heartily wish it were off our hands; I dream about it nights. It is inconceivable that father should have wished us to keep such a thing five years."

"There's an empty drawer in your bureau," remarked Emile, not answering the latter half of his brother's observation.

Horace was holding the case in his two hands and eying it rather absently. "H'm, no," he said, at the end of a moment's reflection: "suppose *you* keep it? I shall feel quieter if it's in your charge."

The younger brother took the case without making any remark, and carried it into the next room, which was his own study. Horace heard the opening of a drawer, and the double clicking of a lock. Then Emile re-appeared with a key in his hand. "If that can make you any easier," he said, "the thing's done. I've put it in my lowest drawer, left-hand side, and we need never look at it again unless you like."

Horace drew a short sigh of relief and gave a nod of thanks to Emile. After which, as the brothers wanted to set their rooms to rights, they fell to picking up the rubbish, wood-shavings, bits of string, shreds of paper, &c., and piled them into the empty deal boxes, preparatory to having these removed to a lumber-room.

It was during a November afternoon, and the two Gerolds were just installed in the lodgings they had taken, Rue St. Geneviève, in the "Latin Quarter," close to the Panthéon. Their father had some weeks since returned to Brussels; in fact he had done no more than pass through Paris, for, as he said with truth enough, the France of '54 was not a place for men who thought as he did. Manuel Gerold had no private fortune save that which had come to him at his nephew's death; but in the course of a long and laborious career as a political writer he had amassed sufficient to end his own days in ease and to start his sons in life comfortably. He could afford to

give them three thousand francs a year apiece, which is a competence in Paris for young barristers who have not extravagant tastes; and, as the Council of the French Bar requires that a man shall have "a decently furnished lodging and a library of books" before he can be admitted to plead, he had spent twelve thousand francs in fitting up the chambers of Horace and Emile, so that Monsieur le Bâtonnier and his colleagues should have no fault to find. The brothers rented a set of rooms on the third floor — one of those good old sets of rooms built a hundred and fifty years ago, with thick walls, deep cupboards, and roomy passages; not like those wretched card-board dwellings which M. Haussmann's architects have contrived — houses where, if the first-floor lodger plays the piano at midnight, he is heard on the sixth story, and keeps some ten or twelve batches of fellow-tenants awake. Horace and Emile had each a study and a bedroom to themselves; and for their joint use there was a kitchen and dining-room, the latter of which, however, as they seldom dined at home, they had converted into a smoking saloon. There was also a cellar for wine, wood, and coal; and if it would interest you to know what all this cost, I may tell you that their combined rent amounted to eight hundred francs, that is, double what they would have had to pay before 1848, and a third less than they would be obliged to pay in 1870.

Clubs being as yet confined in France to men who are rich and can afford to do without them, the brothers dined and breakfasted at one of those *tables d'hôte* so numerous in the Latin Quarter, where young barristers, journalists, doctors, professors, and the better class of students resort. The board cost eighty-five francs a month, *vin ordinaire* included; and for that sum one had a very fair beefsteak or chop, an omelette, fried potatoes, and cheese at eleven, and soup, boiled beef, roast, vegetables, and dessert at six. Certainly the French are adepts in the art of giving *multum pro parvo*. It is impossible to surmise without chagrin what dinner would be given in Great Britain to any individual who expected his six courses *per diem* for sixty-eight shillings a month.

One thousand and twenty francs paid for board and 400 francs for lodging, left each brother 1,580 francs annually for firing and lighting, washing, clothes, and pocket-money. Set down the first two of these items at 100 francs (for between two coal can be eked out), the second at 150 francs, the third at 400 francs, and there remained 930 francs for the last. A young French barrister who has 37*l.* a year for

pocket-money may consider himself favored by Providence. There is no reason why he should deny himself the diurnal *demi-tasse* at his café; he can smoke cigarettes at the rate of one pound of tobacco per month (total 60 francs per annum); on festive occasions he may wear gloves and venture upon a cigar (N.B. a Londres, price 25 centimes, as good as a London regalia if carefully selected); he may also indulge without fear in a cab, if not over addicted to parties; and he will still have a reserve-fund for the exhilaration of beggars, the remuneration of the *concierge* who blackens his boots, makes his bed, and sweeps his room, and for an occasional summer's day excursion to Enghien or Montmorency, should his fancy so lead him. Of course, theatre-going should cost him nothing. Every barrister contrives to know a few journalists, dramatic authors and actors, upon whom he may depend for play-orders — especially during the dog-days.

The house in which Horace and Emile had taken up their abode was the property of a worthy draper named Pochemolle, who kept a shop on the ground floor, and was accounted somewhat a curiosity in the parish. The curiosity lay in this, that the Pochemolles, from father to son, had occupied the house where they then lived for upwards of a hundred and seventy years — a fact so rare, so phenomenal indeed, in the annals of Parisian trade, that certain of M. Pochemolle's customers, unable to grasp the notion in its entirety, had a sort of confused belief that it was M. Achille Pochemolle himself — the Pochemolle of 1854 — who had flourished a hundred and seventy years on the same premises. Yet M. Achille Pochemolle was not more than fifty; and he looked by no means older than his age. He was a small, smug-faced, gooseberry-eyed man, quick in his movements, glib with his tongue, and full of the quaint shop-courtesy of eighty years ago, which he had inherited from his sire and his sire's sire along with their profound veneration for all that concerned the crown, the nobility, and the higher clergy.

It was worth going a visit to the Rue Ste. Geneviève if only to see M. Pochemolle bow when he ushered out a customer or showed one in. He still kept to all the musk-scented traditions of the *grand siècle*. For him, a lady, no matter how old and wrinkled, was always a *belle dame*; and Heaven forbid that he should ever have driven a hard bargain with one of the gentle sex. He used to say, "*Voyez, belle dame, cette étoffe est faite pour vous embellir*," or, "*Belle dame, ce ruban ne peut qu'ajouter à vos grâces*." Ladies liked it, and M. Pochemolle had a fine business connection

amongst ancient dowagers and spinsters of the neighborhood: not to mention two or three nunneries, the sisters of which, pleased to be addressed occasionally in pretty old-world compliments, came to Monsieur P.'s for all that was wanted in the way of linen and drapery for their convents.

In politics M. Pochemolle was a valiant conservative of existing institutions, whatever they were, and, under the circumstances, it might have seemed odd that he should have consented to lodge the sons of a notorious Republican, had it not been for this, that he was under obligations to Manuel Gerold, and frequently acknowledged it with gratitude. As a private first, then as a corporal, and finally as a sergeant in the National Guard, Monsieur P. — had fired his shot in the three insurrections of July, 1830; February, '48; and June, '48; fighting each time on the side of order — that is, on the side of Government; and it was in the last of these battles that, finding himself under the same flag as Manuel Gerold — who was for a moderate Republic, opposed to a "Red" one — he had been saved from certain death by the latter, who, at the risk of his own life, had caught up Monsieur Pochemolle from under a barricade where he was lying stunned, and carried him away to a place of safety. The honest draper, who set a high price on his own life, thought with wonder and admiration of this achievement. He had sworn a lasting gratitude to his preserver, and seemed likely not to forget his oath; for, when Horace and Emile Gerold came with their father to see whether M. Pochemolle had any lodgings to let, he had gladly given them the best he had, without troubling himself about their political opinions. He even went further, for he spread it amongst his own purveyors, grocer, coal-man, and others, that his two new lodgers were young gentlemen "who might be trusted;" and, on the November afternoon, when the brothers were setting their rooms to rights, he came up to see with his own eyes whether they had every thing they wanted, taking with him as his pretext a letter which the postman had just brought for Horace Gerold.

"Come in," cried the brothers, in answer to the good man's knock, and M. Pochemolle with his letter, his gooseberry eyes, and his excellent tongue ready for half an hour's chat, appeared in the doorway.

"A letter, gentlemen," he said; "and I've come to see whether I can be of use to you. Deary me! but these are fine rooms and improved vastly since you're in them. This is a Brussels carpet, five francs twenty-five centimes the *mètre*: I know it by the tread. Nothing can be better than



those crimson curtains, solid cloth of Elbauf, cost a hundred and fifty francs the pair, I'll warrant me. And that's a portrait of your most respected father over the mantle-piece?"

"Yes," smiled Horace, taking the letter and laying it on the table. "Our father has a great esteem for you, Monsieur Pochemolle."

"Not more than I have for him, sir," answered the draper heartily, and, peering into the next room, which was Emile's, he continued: "And that, no doubt, is Madame your most venerated mother?" The picture was one of a fair-haired lady, with tender, expressive eyes. The brothers had scarcely known their mother; she had died when they were both children. They nodded and kept silent.

"Ha," went on Monsieur Achille, changing the subject with ready tact. "These pictures remind me of two of mine own which I must show you down stairs. One is a print made in 1710 (a hundred and forty-four years ago), the other is more recent—1780; both represent a part of the Rue Ste. Geneviève, and you can see my shop in them, not altered a bit from what it is now, with the name Pochemolle over the doorway, and the sign of 'The Three Crowns.' These three crowns, you must know, were the making of our house. Ah, Messieurs, it's a fine story, and you should have heard my grandfather tell it as he had it from his own grandfather, the hero of the tale. Just about as old as you, Monsieur Horace, he was. Then my great-grandfather—one day he was walking along the streets, when he sees a poor woman, worn away with hunger, and two little children on her arms, make a snatch at the purse of a fine gentleman who was stepping out of a coach, and try to run off with it. The two were so near together—he and the woman—that the servants of the gentleman laid hold of him, thinking it was he that had made the snatch; the more so as the crazy thing, in her hurry to get away, had tripped up and let go the purse, which was lying at my ancestor's feet. Of course, this took him breathless like, and he was just going to say what was what, when, looking at the poor creature who was crouching on the ground shaking all over, and clasping her two babies close to her, he couldn't bear giving her up, and so says he: 'Yes, gentlemen, it's I that took the purse.'

"It seems the woman gave him such a look as he never forgot to the day when he was laid in his coffin, and he used to say that it was worth going ten times to the gallows to have eyes look at one as her's did. You see, thieving was no joke then:

it meant the gibbet; and it wasn't everybody that would have run their necks into a noose for a beggar woman they didn't know. Well, they dragged him off to prison, locked him up with chains to his legs, they did; and my grandsire made up his mind that before long they'd have him out on the Place de Grève, and do by him as I dare say he'd seen done by a many a thief and cut-throat. But the gentleman whose purse had been snatched had seen the whole thing; and wasn't going to let evil come of it. He allowed the young man to lie in prison a little while, just to see, probably, how long he would hold out; but when he saw that my grandsire wouldn't budge an inch from his story, but stuck firm to it that it was he that had taken the purse, then he spoke out, and one day came to the jail with a king's order for letting the prisoner loose. He was a great nobleman, was this gentleman—one of the greatest about Louis the Fourteenth's court; and when my grandsire came out of prison—it was the Châtelet; they're building a theatre over the spot now—he saw this great nobleman, who didn't bare his head to many, standing, hat in hand, beside his coach-door. 'Will you do me the honor of riding to Versailles, sir, with me?' he said—aye, he said, 'do me the honor,' he did—'I wish to present you to the king.' And sure enough to Versailles they went, both together, side by side, he and the nobleman in the same coach; and at court the king gave my ancestor his hand to kiss, and the nobles between them subscribed five hundred *louis*, with which this house and the shop below were bought. And the purse which was the cause of the whole business, and which contained three crowns when it was snatched, was presented to my grandsire by the nobleman, along with a diamond ring. They're both under a glass case in our back parlor now, and I can tell you, gentlemen, we're proud of 'em."

"Well you may be," exclaimed Emile Gerold, warmly. "There's not a nobleman could show a more splendid patent of nobility than that purse and the three crowns."

"And what became of the woman?" asked Horace Gerold.

"Our benefactor took care of her, too. He set her up in a cottage on his country estate, and I believe her sons grew up to be honest peasants. But I don't feel much for her, though," added M. Pochemolle, sagaciously; "for, after all, if the nobleman hadn't had his eyes about him when the thing happened, she'd have let my grandsire swing, which would have been a pretty end for a man that had never fingered a

penny that wasn't his own, and would as soon have thought of thieving as of committing murder."

Whilst speaking, M. Pochemolle strode about the rooms, continuing to inspect every thing, feeling the coverings of chairs and sofas with a professional touch, digging his fists into mattresses and pillows to test their elasticity, and closely scrutinizing the wood of which tables and bureaux were made. "I don't want to be talking only about myself, gentlemen," he said bluffly; "let's talk a little about yourselves; the goings-on of an old family a hundred and seventy years ago can't interest you much, though it's civil of you to listen. Hullo, what's this?"

In ferreting about, M. Pochemolle had come upon some framed pictures standing on the floor with their faces to the wall, waiting to be hung up. He took one and turned it to the light. It was a print of David's celebrated picture, *Le Serment du Jeu de Paume*.<sup>\*</sup> Poor M. Pochemolle became suddenly grave.

"No, no," said he, shaking his forefinger before his face and looking reproachfully from one brother to the other. "No, no, no — don't have any thing to do with 'em."

"With whom?" asked Horace, amused.

"With them there," and M. Pochemolle pointed ruefully to the grand figure of the Revolutionist, Bailly, standing with hand uplifted in the foreground of the picture. "They're not fit company for gentlemen like you to associate with," he went on; "no, they ain't, indeed. And if you'd seen as much of 'em as I have, you'd wash your hands of 'em now and for altogether."

"Are you speaking of the Revolutionists?" inquired Emile.

"Ay, sir, I am."

"But comé, M. Pochemolle, you were a Republican yourself, not so long ago," observed Horace, laughing. "It was in fighting for the provisional government, that you received the blow on the head which gave our father the opportunity of picking you up, and making your acquaintance."

"Ay, Monsieur, but the blow on the head doesn't prove I was a Republican. When I was a little chap ten years old, no higher than that pair of tongs yonder, I went to the Barrière de Clichy to throw stones at the Cossacks, who were marching into Paris. Throwing stones was the most we could do, for we were too small to fire guns.

<sup>\*</sup> In 1789, Louis XVI., wishing to throw impediments in the way of the sittings of the States-General, who appeared to him to be voting reforms too fast, ordered the debate room at Versailles to be closed, under pretence of repairs. The members thereupon adjourned to the Tennis Court, and there swore a solemn oath not to cease from their work until they had drawn up a new constitution. David's pencil has immortalized this episode.

Sixteen years later, when M. Lafayette and that set were overthrowing Charles X., I went out and did my best to prevent them. The National Guard was dissolved then, but I put on my uniform all the same and went to join the regulars. I stuck to it three days, July 27, 28, and 29, along with the Royal Guards at the Tuileries; and, if the Bourbons were expelled, it wasn't for want of fighting on my part. In 1848 came our King Louis Philippe's turn, and I was out again, Feb. 23, 24, and 25, never closing an eye once during the three days, and seeing six and thirty men of my company shot down by the Faubourgiens. Well, we were beat, as you know; your respected father and his friends came to power, and there was nothing for it but to rally round them to prevent their being swept away in their turn by the 'Reds.' That's why I fought for them in the three days of June, but it doesn't prove I'm a Republican, for I should do just as much for the Emperor Napoleon if any one were to try and get rid of him."

"H'm, then you can boast with your hand on your heart that you have consistently opposed progress of every sort and kind, and are prepared to do so again," remarked Horace, good-humoredly, but with a small point of irony.

"Ay, sir, I can," answered M. Pochemolle simply, though not without a counter point of irony. "I can, if you think that progress and revolution mean the same thing; but I don't. Let's have order first, I say; then we'll see about the rest afterwards."

"Yet you must have some preference for one form of government over the other," ejaculated Emile, not a little scandalized at this — to him — new way of talking.

"Yes, I like any thing better than a republic," responded M. Pochemolle with deliberation. "See, gentlemen, what is it that we tradesmen most want, — peace, isn't it? — and a good strong government that'll let us sell our wares quietly, and keep the ragamuffins from breaking our windows. Well, when your honored father and his friends were in office, what did we have? I know they were honest men and meant well; but honesty's not enough: it's like butter without the bread: the bread's strength, and we want strength, too. M. Lamartine, M. Louis Blanc, and M. Gerold made us handsome promises, and, I know, did their best to keep them; but what did it all come to? Why, in '48, we paid twice more taxes than we'd ever paid before; we were out four days a week quelling riots, and there was no more business doing than if we'd all been living in famine time. Now under the emperor, I don't say but

that the taxes are high; only we can afford to pay them. Trade's been brisker these three years past, spite of the war and that, than I ever remember it before: and we don't have any rioting."

"Oh! if you look at these questions from the counter point of view," interrupted Emile Gerold a little contemptuously.

"Well, sir, don't we all look at things through our particular set of glasses?" rejoined the honest draper roundly. "Here are you two gentlemen come to Paris to start as lawyers, and I am bound I shall hear you both make many a fine speech before I've done with you; but don't you think that what some of you gentlemen are most eager after when you stand up to preach for freedom and all that, is the making yourselves popular names in order that people may flock round you, and pay you well for taking their cases in hand? Leastways, that's my experience of a good many barristers."

"There's no harm in wishing to become popular," remarked Emile energetically.

"No, sir; nor in wishing to sell one's goods," replied the draper with a laugh. "Only I'll tell you what's the mistake many of the popular gentlemen make: they ask for a great deal more than we want, and a great deal more than's good for us to have; then they've another trick, which is to promise a good bit more than they can ever give."

"I believe you're trying to paint yourself much blacker than you really are," interposed Horace, smiling. "You can't care for freedom so little as you say, M. Pochemolle. That you should like selling your goods is natural enough, but you are a Frenchman, and must see something else in good government but a mere question of trade profits. Isn't there any satisfaction in being a free man in a free land? Is there no humiliation in living under a Government which treats us like children, not old enough to think for ourselves? Why, now, to go no further than your own case, do you find you have lost nothing by this new state of things? Formerly you had a parliament which debated and voted freely under public control; you could hold meetings whenever you wished to discuss political concerns; you had a free press; you elected your own mayors and your own officers in the National Guard; in a word, you were accounted somebody, and played your part in the State. But now what has become of all your rights?"

"Well, there you put the question in plain terms, and I'll answer you in the same way," replied M. Pochemolle, digging both hands into his pockets, and looking cheerily at the brothers. "A few years ago, as you

say, we had all those rights, and what did they profit us? Why, during eighteen mortal years, we had nothing but M. Guizot trying to turn out M. Thiers, and M. Thiers trying to turn out M. Guizot. What do you think I cared whether it was M. Guizot or the other who was in? There wasn't a pin's head to choose between them, so far as real opinions went; only for this, perhaps, that it was M. Thiers, who talked the fastest about good government, that gave us the least of it: for 'twas in his time that we almost had the war with England, and were taxed seventy millions to pay for Paris fortifications. Then there was the press. Ah! to be sure, that was free enough: there were a couple of hundred gentlemen who abused each other in the papers every evening, and ran each other through in the Bois de Boulogne of a morning. Very pleasant for those who were journalists, but as I wasn't one, that freedom didn't help me. Next, we had the right to elect our own officers in the National Guard, and do you know what was the result? why, there wasn't a ten sous' worth of discipline among the whole lot of us. At election-time it used to be a disgraceful sight to see the officers fawning to the privates, and if one of them was above doing it, or was at all sharp in commanding, why, twenty to one voted against him; so that he had to carry the musket again, after having worn the epaulet. I know what it is; for I don't want to make myself out better than I am: I once voted against my captain, simply because he'd blown me up before company about my rifle, which wasn't properly cleaned; only I'm hanged if I didn't feel a pang when I saw him, after the election, come and take up his stand in the ranks, whilst I had become a corporal. Then there used to be eternal fallings-out between the members of the Guard who were tradesmen and those who were professional, such as doctors, lawyers, retired officers from the army, and the like. These last were for having all the officers elected out of their set; and we tradesmen, who were in a majority, used to spite them, by electing nothing but our own party. I've seen a grocer, a tailor, and a baker, all officers in one company. I don't say a grocer can't be as brave as another man; only selling candles behind a counter doesn't prepare one for commanding troops, as we found out fast enough when the Revolution came. Shall I tell you now about our free parliament? There were four hundred of 'em in it, and the amount of talking they did was prodigious. They were at it six days a week during seven months out of the year, but I'm blessed if they ever did that for us" (M. Pochemolle snapped his fingers) "besides talking. We wanted new

drains for Paris; they wouldn't give 'em us — said it cost too much. We wanted new streets — same story. We had in the Cité yonder a whole lump of courts and alleys where people could punch one another's heads out of their windows from opposite sides of the street. They bred filth and fever they did, and so swarmed with rascals, that if the police wanted to lay hold of anybody there, they had to go twenty and thirty together. You'd have thought it would have been a mercy to burn the whole place; but when it came to be a matter of knocking it down and building something new and clean instead, everybody cried, 'Oh, no!' and 'Where's the money to come from?' And, I tell you, I was as bad as the rest of 'em, for though I wasn't a member of the House of Deputies, yet when me and a lot more of us, who had votes, used to get talking together about municipal business and other things we didn't understand, we were always saying 'No' to every thing. I remember I used to come straight slap out with the 'Nq' before I knew what the question was about; it was a habit I'd got into. But at present all that's changed. Our Emperor he says, 'I'm here to rule,' and he does what's good for us: builds new streets and the like without taking counsel of anybody. And quite right too; for you see, gentlemen, let each man keep to his own walk, say I: I'm a famous good hand at selling cloth, calico, and ribbons, but I understand next to nothing about governing a country, and I don't see what any of you 'ud have to gain by letting me try."

Emile gave a shrug: Horace laughed.

"Well, that's candid and modest enough, anyhow, M. Pochemolle," he said. "I can't say you've quite convinced me. In any case, I daresay we sha'n't be the less good friends from thinking differently."

"No, no, that we sha'n't, sir: we sha'n't indeed," answered M. Pochemolle. "Only" — and here M. P., relapsing into a serious vein, cast another deprecating look towards the picture of the Revolutionists which he had abandoned on the table during his last harangue, — "Only trust me, gentlemen, and don't have any thing to do with *them*. I've never known it lead to any thing but fighting in the streets and imprisonment afterwards. If they were all cut out of the same cloth as your respected father, it might be another matter; but they're not. I knew a Republican who talked very handsome about the rights of man, and went away without paying my bill."

M. Pochemolle was very exhaustive when he got on the subject of his antipathy for Revolutionists, and might have adduced numerous other instances of Republican shortcomings had not a knock at the door

interrupted him at this juncture, whilst a feminine voice from without cried: "Papa, you're wanted in the shop."

"Ah, that's my little girl, gentlemen," said M. Pochemolle; and opening the door he revealed a bright young lady, who looked some seventeen springs old, and was as pretty as clear hazel eyes, thick chestnut curls (young ladies wore curls in '54), red lips and neat dressing could make her. She reddened slightly at finding herself before two strange messieurs, but was not otherwise shy, for she repeated to her sire what she had already said, and added that it was "*maman*" who had sent her up to say that Monsieur Macrobe and his daughter were down stairs. She begged the messieurs' pardon for disturbing them.

"Come here, Georgette, and let me introduce you to these gentlemen," said M. Pochemolle, with a not unpardonable look of fatherly pride. "Gentlemen, you only saw my wife and my son when you came to take your rooms the other day. Here is my daughter, who was staying away with her aunt then. Georgette, these are the M.M. Gerold, sons of Monsieur Gerold, who faced the fire of revolutionary rifles to save your father's life.\* Make your best courtesy to them. Gentlemen, this is my little Georgette — my pet child." And the worthy man led the young lady forward by the hand.

There was the most graceful of bows on the part of Horace Gerold, a not less civil but graver salutation on the part of Emile, and a demure courtesy with more blushing from Mdlle. Georgette. As Frenchmen are never at a loss for compliments, M. Horace, who was always collected in the face of the adverse sex, added a few pretty words, which seemed to please M. Pochemolle. Mdlle. Georgette herself cast her eyes on the ground with an almost imperceptible smile, as if the young man's compliments were not the first she had heard in her life.

"And now to business," exclaimed the draper. "Monsieur Macrobe and his young lady sha'n't be kept waiting long, my dear. Ah, gentlemen, you should see Mademoiselle Macrobe — a pearl, as we should have said in my young days, though I wouldn't exchange her for my Georgette. But she'll marry a duke or a king before she's done; I'd stake twenty bales of cloth on it. Then there's her father, too. Lord bless my soul, what a long head! That's the kind of man to make a deputy of if

\* N.B. — This was not quite historically correct, for the firing had ceased when M. G. picked up M. P., and it is not so sure that the latter would have died, even if he had not been picked up at all. But gratitude may be pardoned for exaggerating.

you like. When he started in life he'd not two brass farthings to rub together, and no profession either, nor trade, nor teaching, so far as I could see; and yet now — why, he rolls his carriage, and I guess he won't live much longer in this quarter; he'll be emigrating towards the Champs Elysées or the Chaussée d'Antin. Worse luck, for I shall lose a first-rate customer. A rising man, gentlemen, and thinks like me about politics; ay, it's not in his mouth you'd ever hear a word against the emperor."

Mille. Georgette pulled her father's sleeve.

"M. Macrobe was in a hurry, father."

"Yes, my dear, coming; it won't do to offend M. Macrobe. Gentlemen, your servant; and if ever I can serve you, pray do me the honor to command me. Georgette, my pet, make another courtesy to the Messieurs Gerold."

And Mademoiselle Georgette did.

"Queer card!" laughed Horace, when the good M. Pochemolle had retreated.

"I hope we shall see as little as possible of him for the future," answered the younger brother, dryly. "I don't like such cynicism."

"Oh! cynicism is a big word," observed Horace. "I don't see any thing cynic in the matter. We can't all think alike, you know."

Emile, for all his gentleness, was much less tolerant of hostile opinions than his brother. His was the nature out of which enthusiasts are moulded. He answered bitterly, "It's those sort of men who've helped to bring France to her present humiliation, and to send our father into exile. What wonder that there should be despots to treat us Frenchmen like slaves, when they are encouraged to it by such people as this — fellows who are ready to stand up for anybody in power, and to truckle to any government that will fill their tills."

"Whew — w — w!" whistled Horace. "Why look at things so gloomily, brother? Let's have freedom all round in the community. Think what it would be if everybody professed the same opinions — half the fun of life would be gone. Besides, it seems to me that a man who goes out three or four times over, and risks his life for his opinions, however absurd these may be, has a right to be respected. It isn't the same as sticking to one's convictions only so long as they pay you."

Emile shook his head, unconvinced; but the discussion was not prolonged further, for Horace remembered the letter which the draper had brought, and which was lying unopened on the table. He had not looked at the address, but, on taking it, saw that it was in Manuel Gerold's hand-

writing. "It's from our father," he said, breaking the seal; and Emile having asked him to read aloud, he read as follows: —

"BRUSSELS, November, 1854.

"MY DEAR BOYS, — I have just received your letters, informing me that you were almost installed; and by same post a copy of the 'Moniteur,' with your names amongst those of the new barristers admitted at the opening of the courts. It is a great satisfaction to me to feel that you are now fairly launched, both of you, in a profession where merit and hard work are more surely and liberally rewarded than in any other calling you could have chosen. The Bar will lead you to any thing, though your progress must be at first slow; but you can afford to wait, and you are too sensible not to be aware that the only stable reputations are those which are acquired laboriously, by dint of patience and energy. Had I staid longer in Paris, I should have introduced you to such few of my friends as still remain there. The number of them is terribly dwindled down, for most of us men of '48 have been scattered to the four winds; but there is Claude Febvre, one of the leaders of your profession, who has always been my firm ally — you will do well to call upon him. He will be sure to receive you kindly, and may be able to help you forward. In the press, Nestor Roche, the editor of 'La Sentinelle,' is my old and valued friend. You might find him a little rough at first, but there is a heart of gold under his shagginess. He lives at the office of his paper, Rue Montmartre. I should think it not improbable that my bankers, MM. Lecoq and Roderheim, would wish to show you some civility, and asks you to their parties; in which case you would perhaps do well to go, for my relations with the firm have always been friendly. I hear that they have just taken a new partner, a man named Macrobe. If it is the same Macrobe I knew in 1848, he will be likely to invite you, too. He was a curious fellow, whom I could never quite understand. I believe he was a very warm Republican, acted once or twice on my electoral committees, and during the Provisional Government asked me several times to assist him in getting army and navy contracts. I mention this because somehow he knew all about our family history, who I was, and the rest of it. I used to have some trouble in preventing him from trumping up my affairs in public, and paying me compliments. His object seemed to be to make friends with me; for though I never helped him in his contract hunting, he always professed to be a great supporter of mine" —

"Macrobe!" muttered Horace, breaking off. "Why, that's the name of M. Pochemolle's customer down stairs. I wonder whether the two are the same."

"M. Pochemolle said his M. Macrobe was a Bonapartist."

"H'm, to-day — yes; but he said nothing about six years ago."

"If they be the same," remarked Emile, quietly, "M. Macrobe may spare himself the trouble of showing any civilities to me."

Horace said nothing, but took up the reading where he had left off, and finished the letter: —

" . . . . Amongst my other quondam friends, I need not remind you of one whom you frequently saw come and visit me in old times: I mean M. Gribaud, who is now Minister of State. You remember the letter he wrote on the morrow of the *coup-d'état*, acquainting me with his sudden change of politics, and advising me to follow his example: you have not forgotten either the reply which I sent him. Under the circumstances, I scarcely think it probable that M. Gribaud will care to recollect he was once on such warm terms with us; and if he hears that you are in Paris, he will, doubtless, not trouble you with cards for any of those Ministerial soirées of his, which I hear are so much envied. Still, there is no knowing. My letter to him was not sharp: it was merely cold; and there is just a possibility that out of vanity or bravado, or from other motives difficult to analyze, he will invite you to go and witness his present splendor. Should this be the case, I confess it would please me to hear that you had held as completely aloof from this man as you would from any other individual who had shown himself openly dishonest. The world is indulgent towards men who have succeeded, and easily condones the villanies to which they may owe their triumphs; but for this reason it is the more important that strictly honorable men should build up a higher and sterner code of morality. You and I cannot harm M. Gribaud: neither would we if we could; but we can refuse him our homage, and so mark in our humble way that we draw no difference between the knavery that leads to the hulks and that which leads to the Cabinet.

"Let me hear from both of you as often as possible without intruding too much on your time, and believe me,

"My dear Boys,

"Your ever affectionate Father,

"MANUEL GEROLD."

Whilst Horace Gerold was reading this

letter to his brother, M. Pochemolle the draper, with his daughter Mlle. Georgette, had returned to the shop on the ground floor, in order to attend on the important M. Macrobe. This gentleman — who at first sight looked like a weasel, upon closer inspection like a badger, and who, after mature examination, left one doubtful as to whether there were not a chimpanzee or two amongst his ancestors — was standing at one of the counters conversing volubly with the draper's wife, and holding up a piece of silk to the light to test the quality of the woof. The good M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle, stout, buxom, and blazing in scarlet capstrings, had been thrown into a sudden state of excitement and perspiration by the entry of this well-to-do but restless customer. M. Macrobe was one of those gentlemen who turn a shop upside down before they have been in it five minutes. At his bidding, M. Alcibiade Pochemolle, heir of M. Achille, had been made to haul down bales upon bales of silk, velvets, and satin, box after box of ribbons, until the counter was encumbered half a yard high with merchandise. The person for whose edification all this bustling and scurrying was supposed to take place was Mlle. Angélique Macrobe, but it was her father who virtually did all the shopping. Mlle. Angélique herself was a blue-eyed, blonde-haired, angel-faced child, who looked at people with a perpetual expression of soft wonder, and acquiesced in every thing her sire proposed in a quiet, pleased sort of way, as if she quite appreciated the blessing of having somebody to take the trouble of thinking off her hands. In terming her "child," I must be understood to speak figuratively, for her pretty baby-face was eighteen years old, and she was decked out in all the finery which proclaims a candidate in that most moral of competitions called the marriage-market.

M. Macrobe nodded when the draper came in, and, continuing to look through the silk, "Morning, M. Pochemolle," he said. "Brought my daughter here to lay in winter stores. Goodish bit of silk this, but I don't believe in the dye. What's the news?"

In Macrobian phraseology, "What's the news?" had no reference whatever to the state of anybody's health or to occurrences in the political world. M. Macrobe was better informed that any man in Paris as to things politic, and the condition of people's health was a matter of great indifference to him. "What's the news?" was a query intended to elicit information as to what M. M. called "possible bargains." If there was any thing to be sold anywhere at a loss to the seller — anything from the

stock of a bankrupt tradesman to the "Stradivarius" of a starving fiddler or the pug-dog of a ruined actress, M. Macrobe was the man to seize the occasion by the forelock. It was by constantly inquiring "What's the news?" during a course of thirty years that M. Macrobe had, bit by bit, picked up his fortune.

"I don't think there's much doing in the quarter, sir," answered the draper, hastening behind his counter, with a respectful salutation, first to the daughter, and then to the father. "Nothing in the way of news, I mean. Trade's brisk, and money's plentiful enough, though to be sure I heard somebody say that our neighbor the Armorer, three doors off, was in a bad way. Didn't you tell me something about it, my dear?" (this to his wife).

"Yes, indeed," answered M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle, looking up from the velvet she was spreading before M<sup>lle</sup>. Angélique. "An honest man, too, and was getting on well in his business; but they say his son's not turned out what he should have done; his father's had to pay his debts, and this coming on the top of foolish gambling in stocks, has put him in a low way."

"What's the name and address?" asked M. Macrobe.

"Quirot, Armorer and Curiosity Shop, Number 9 in this street," said the draper; and down at once went the name of Quirot, 9 Rue Ste. Geneviève, in the note-book which M. Macrobe had whipped out from the breast-pocket of his coat.

"Generally, something to be picked up in a curiosity shop," he muttered. "Now then, my pet, have you seen any thing you like? Fairish velvet, M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle; this year's make; can tell it by the touch. We shall want three ball-dresses—eh, pet?—what do you say to a white, a pink and white, and a light blue,—blue's what goes best with your hair."

M<sup>lle</sup>. Angélique smiled and said, "Yes, papa."

"Measure out the silk, please, M. Pochemolle; and now twenty *mètres* of that velvet for a dinner-dress; ten of that white satin for a petticoat; enough white cashmere to make an opera cloak."

"Four *mètres*, M. Macrobe?"

"No, no: a goodish cloak like a shawl; something like the burnouses those Arab fellows wear: a thing to wrap one up all over—it's warmer and it's more *chic*. You must tell M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle yourself, pet, how much trimming 'll be wanted."

M<sup>lle</sup>. Angélique said, "Yes, papa," as before, and turned with a helpless look towards the draper's wife, to wonder how much trimming would be required for four dresses. Whilst M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle was

doing her best to enlighten her on the weighty point, M. Macrobe had inquired for a second time of the draper whether he had any more news to give.

M. Pochemolle was up to his neck in silk, which was flooding the counter in waves a yard long as fast as he could measure it. He was full of merriment at the fine stroke of business he was doing that afternoon, so he answered with respectful joviality,—

"Should you consider it news, sir, to hear that I've got two fresh lodgers?"

"Depends who they are," replied the financier, quite seriously.

"Their name's Gerold, sir."

"Gerold!" echoed M. Macrobe, quickly; "any relations to Manuel Gerold?"

"They're his sons, sir; M. Horace and M. Emile Gerold."

Out came M. Macrobe's pocket-book in a trice.

"What floor, M. Pochemolle? what's the age of the two young gentlemen? and what are they doing in Paris? Manuel Gerold's a most intimate friend of mine, banks with us: a curious character, but—ahem!—very well off—very."

A little astonished, M. Pochemolle informed his customer that his lodgers were on the third floor, that they had not been with him long, that they were quiet young gentlemen, and that their profession was the law. "Wasn't aware that you knew them, M. Macrobe," he added; "I was just talking with them, when Georgette came up to fetch me; but they didn't say any thing at the mention of your name."

"Nor do I know *them*," answered M. Macrobe, promptly jotting down, *Horace and Emile Gerold, 3d floor over Pochemolle's, Rue Sainte Geneviève*. "Manuel Gerold's the man I know; but his sons and I will soon scrape acquaintance. Angélique my child, remember the Messieurs Gerold, and tell your aunt, when you get home, to have them down on her list for our next party. But stay: they live in this house: why shouldn't I go up and drop a card whilst you're making out your bill, M. Pochemolle?" and M. Macrobe fumbled in his pockets for a pair of black kid-gloves, which did duty with him on ceremonious occasions.

"I am sure they will be delighted to see you, sir," observed the draper. And the worthy man spoke as he thought; for, indeed, it seemed to him impossible that anybody should be otherwise than delighted at the sight of an individual so eminently prosperous as M. Macrobe. The latter drew on his gloves, gave his hat a brush with the sleeve of his coat, and walked out; but he was spared the trouble of climbing up three flights of stairs, for he had scarce-

ly left the shop when the two sons of his most intimate friend emerged from the *porte-cochère* of the house in person. They had finished their decorating up stairs, and were on their way to make a few calls before dinner. M. Pochemolle noticed them through the window, went out and stopped them as they were passing his shop, and then ran after M. Macrobe crying, "Those were the MM. Gerold, sir, whom you met going in."

In another half minute M. Macrobe, with a most friendly smirk on his acute physiognomy, was holding out his hand to the younger of the two brothers. He had mistaken him for the elder, on account of his graver face and stronger build. "Monsieur le Marquis de Hautbourg, I'm truly glad that hazard should have thrown me in your way," he began; "hope I see you well? Only just heard you were in Paris."

"My name's not Marquis of Hautbourg," answered Emile very distantly. "Here is my elder brother."

"And I call myself Horace Gerold," continued the other, not less distantly, but with rather more curiosity in his tone.

"Ah! yes; I perfectly understand; aversion to titles; most respectable prejudice; am a Republican myself to the backbone. Your father and I are great friends, M. Horace: my name is Macrobe."

"Oh! you are M. Macrobe," said Horace, amused.

"At your service, M. Horace: Macrobe, of 'Lecoq, Röderheim and Macrobe,' your bankers. Dear me, what a likeness between father and sons! Do me the pleasure to step in a moment, M. Horace and M. Emile, and let me introduce my daughter to you."

From the moment when he heard the name Macrobe, Emile set his face rigidly and answered only in monosyllables. Horace suffered himself to be led into the shop by the arm and presented in due form to Mademoiselle Angélique. The draper's daughter, who remembered the pretty compliment with which the well-looking young gentleman had honored her some twenty minutes before, raised her eyes slyly from the parcel she was tying, to see whether he was going to publish a second edition of this flattery for Mademoiselle Macrobe. But nothing save the usual courtesies took place. Perhaps Horace Gerold was too much struck by Mademoiselle Angélique's beauty to say any thing; for in truth to those who saw her for the first time, the sweet candid-faced girl appeared the incarnation of all that was lovely and lovable in woman. Her courtesy to the two brothers was a model in its way, Mademoiselle An-

gélisque being an adept pupil of M. Celarius, her dancing-master.

M. Macrobe, not unmindful of the effect created by his daughter's beauty, followed up his advantages by at once inviting Horace and Emile — but especially Horace — to come and dine on an early day. "Quiet people we are," he said, with a bluntness not quite suited to the weas'ly mobility of his eyes and the fox-like acuity of his nose. "I live here in this quarter not far off from you — Rue de Seine, opposite the Luxembourg. Name a day, and we'll have as snug a dinner as you could get in Paris. Twelve at table, you know, just enough to be cosey, and I'll ask a solicitor or two: it's good for young barristers to be friends with solicitors."

Though the invitation was cordial, Horace politely regretted that the number of his pressing engagements would prevent him from naming a day; and there he was going to stop, but — after a second's hesitation, and a glance in the direction of Mademoiselle Angélique — he promised he would do himself the pleasure of calling. Emile, more wary, promised nothing; but the assurance of the elder was enough for M. Macrobe, who appeared satisfied.

For the last five minutes the fingers of the entire Pochemolle family had been nimbly at work, folding, rolling, parcelling, and stringing. M. Alcibiade Pochemolle, the cashier of the firm, now went to his high desk and totted up the items of the various purchases into one grand-total, smearing the whole with sand by way of conclusion, under pretence of blotting it. "Shall we book to your account, M. Macrobe?" he asked.

"No, I closed my account last autumn," said the financier; "for the future I pay ready money. Knock off the discount."

This was at once done, for the house of Pochemolle and Son transacted business on the fine old principle of deducting 6 per cent for cash. The bill was a heavy one; but I dare say M. Macrobe was not altogether grieved. He read aloud the total — 2,785 *francs 75 centimes* — with some ostentation, drew out three bank-notes of 1,000 francs each, and paid without a word. This feat, however, reminded him once more that Manuel Gerold banked with his firm: so, taking Horace by the button of his coat, he drew him a step aside, and said, "It's we, you know, who are to pay you your allowance, 3,000 francs a year; but I've been a young man myself, and know what it is. If ever you're hard up, don't forget where I live: my cash-box is not like the bank, it's open at all hours — to my friends."

"Thank you; I never contract debts



which I have no prospect of paying," replied Horace curtly.

A few years before, whilst he was still a law student, M. Macrobe's offer might have stirred him to emotion; at present, he felt inclined to resent it as an impertinence, the more so as he recalled the passage of his father's letter, in which the acquaintance of the financier with the Gerold family concerns was hinted at.

But M. Macrobe, who knew nothing about any passage in a letter, grinned at the young man's stiff answer, and, with a leer that was intended to be arch, said, "Oh! of course, of course, M. Horace, that's the proper reply to make — never accept a loan till you want it. Only, mind what I say, and if ever you do want, come to me. All in friendship, you know; no securities or any thing of that kind — plain word of honor, and down goes the money."

And with this he turned on his heel, leaving no time for a second refusal.

Mademoiselle Angélique had risen at this juncture, and was preparing to leave the shop as soon as her father should be ready. Seeing the financier's brougham standing outside, Horace could scarcely do less than offer the young lady his arm to help her into the carriage. Even had he wished to evade performing this civility, he would have been unable to do so, for M. Macrobe, in going to the counter to get his bill receipted, cried, "I am sure, my dear, M. Horace will kindly give you his arm whilst Madame Pochemolle counts me my change."

And so the two young people walked out together, preceded by the Pochemolles male, both of them freighted with cardboard boxes and packets.

Mdlle. Angélique scarcely touched Horace's sleeve with her dainty gloved hand; and, in answer to a remark of his respecting the coldness of the weather, replied, "Yes, Monsieur, it is," with the same depth of earnestness with which she would have subscribed to an article of the Christian faith. Once she was safely stowed into the brougham, and had mildly thanked Horace, M. Macrobe came bustling out amidst the bows and murmured benedictions of the Pochemolles, and took farewell of the brothers. He did not attempt to shake hands with Emile, for he was a perspicacious man was M. Macrobe, and easily discerned where he was not welcome: but he shook hands warmly with Horace, and repeated, "Mind, M. Horace, Rue de Seine; always delighted to see you — Angélique too."

And with this, not forgetful of business, he directed his coachman to stop at the curiosity shop of the ill-starred M. Quirot,

out of whom he hoped to be able to screw a bargain.

When the carriage had rolled off, the first remark of Horace to his brother was: "That's the most beautiful girl I've ever seen in my life; if she's as intelligent as she's lovely, she must be a paragon."

Precisely at the same moment M. Macrobe was discoursing to his offspring in this strain: "My pet, that M. Horace with the light moustaches is a marquis, and, at the death of his father, who is a little cracked — in fact, entirely cracked — he will be a duke, and have one of the finest fortunes in France. I'd no idea we should meet him in Paris in this way; but, since I've had the luck, why, I'll get him to come and see us; and — h'm — you'll try and be civil to him, won't you, pet?"

To which speech Mademoiselle Angélique replied with a smile of placid obedience, such as a seraph might have envied: "Yes, papa."

## CHAPTER VI.

### A FIRST BRIEF.

HORACE GEROLD did not immediately redeem his promise of going to call on the financier. After thinking during a day or two of the sweet face and tiny hand of Mademoiselle Angélique, that young lady and her sire went out of his head, and it was fully three months before he renewed acquaintance with them. In the mean while, M. Macrobe spared neither letters nor invitation cards, and when these were declined, he came himself to pay personal visits; but he never found the brothers at home. The fact is, they were hard workers. Ambitious to push their way quickly, they slaved at their trade as men must slave who wish to succeed. This is the life they led: Up at seven, they fagged at law-books — but principally the Code — till eleven; at eleven they went out and breakfasted at their *table d'hôte*, which took them till about a quarter to twelve; breakfast over, they walked down together to the Palace of Justice, put on their caps and gowns, and went from court to court, listening to cases, until six; in the evenings, after dinner, they generally spent a couple of hours in the Café Procope, reading the papers and talking politics with fellow-barristers; and the remainder of their time was devoted to the same employment as the early morning: that is, either in studying law or in getting up history — one of the most indis-

pensable branches of knowledge in a country where barristers have so often to defend political offenders. The time spent in the courts was that which seemed most arduous to them both, and here a marked difference in their characters became discernible. Unlike his brother, Emile seldom went into the criminal courts. He usually selected the most complicated case on the Civil Roll, and sat the trial out with stolid patience from first to last, often foregoing his breakfast to be earlier in his place, and taking notes with an unflagging attention, which earned him the admiration of some of the judges, by whom he soon came to be noticed as "that young man who never goes to sleep."

Frequently it happened that Emile was the only barrister—and, indeed, the only spectator—present, besides the counsel, and these last would marvel to see him follow all the mazes of some terrifically intricate argument concerning a disputed boundary wall, an unintelligible passage in a codicil, or a right of way over a footpath. They would have been much more astonished, had they known that Emile Gerold generally studied these arguments a second time, when he got home, in the "Gazette des Tribunaux," making it a principle, once he had taken up a case, to master it thoroughly. Horace could not have stood this up-hill kind of labor. The cases he selected in preference were those which promised most excitement. The court of assize, the sixth and seventh chambers of correctional police, during press trials, and the third civil court, pending a *suit en séparation de corps et de biens*,—these were his places of favorite resort, though his object was not to recreate himself by listening to scandal-mongering witnesses; for he commonly went out of court whilst evidence was being taken, and only came in during the speeches of counsel, *pro* and *con*, and during the summing-up. Whilst his brother was laying down a solid stratum of law-experience, and learning to be a close, persevering reasoner, Horace was acquiring the gift of a ready tongue,—not very strong in argument, but clever at that headforemost kind of rhetoric which capsize a jury, and drags the public along with it. He was the disciple and admirer of the half-dozen leading barristers who held public prosecutors in check, kept a whole court fizzing with excitement whilst they spoke, and were known to the outside world through the medium of their daguerrotype portraits, purchasable on the Boulevards for twenty francs.

One day, Horace had been listening to a remarkable orator of this school, who, with much credit to himself and great advantage

to society, had been rescuing an assassin from the scaffold; and he was walking along the gallery, which leads from the Assize Court to the Salle des Pas Perdus (French Westminster Hall), musing what a fine thing it was to set twelve jurymen whimpering in concert, when, on reaching the hall, he was almost run into by a man with a preposterous-looking hat, who was wandering about in a purposeless sort of way, evidently seeking somebody, but not paying much attention to whether his steps led him. This man's hat at once stamped him as being out of the ruck of common humanity. It was a hat such as could only figure on the head of one who despised conventionalities, and was wont to pursue his own course in life, undeterred by sarcasm. It was a tall hat, made of silk, and towering into a peak, with an altogether obsolete brim, twice as wide as those ordinarily in vogue, and standing straight out from the crown of the hat, without the least curve, like the balcony of a window. Underneath this head-dress gleamed the face of a man of sixty, round and smooth-shaven, all but the moustache, which hung gray and wild to below the chin. The eyes were bright and intelligent, though cold and searching. The nose, mouth, chin, and lips, were all large and boldly-delineated, denoting a man who held pretty grimly by his opinions once he had formed them, and was no more to be bantered out of a crotchet than to be intimidated out of a resolution. There are faces like this on which one may read character as in an open book. The man was dressed, regardless of fashion, in wide loose clothes. He sported a broad collar, turned down over his coat, and leaving a good deal of his throat bare. His hands were in his trousers-pockets.

He made no apology to Horace for nearly running into him; but, seeing the latter was a barrister, he said, "Can you tell me where I'm likely to find Maître\* Claude Febvre?"

Claude Febvre was the barrister upon whom Manuel Gerold had recommended his sons to call. The brothers had done so, and were on very good terms with the great pleader, who had promised to take them in hand and help them forward as soon as he could. At that moment, Claude Febvre happened to be in the provinces, standing counsel in a suit at Bordeaux, so that Horace was able to inform the stranger that it was no use looking for him at the palace.

"At Bordeaux is he?" responded the man with the hat. "Well, it doesn't much matter. I should have retained him

\* Maître (Master) is the substitute for Monsieur in the case of French barristers. The title is only used at the law courts.

because he's a friend of mine; but my affair is as plain as a mill-board: anybody can plead it." He fixed his eyes on Horace Gerold, surveyed him half a minute, as if taking measure of his quality, and then said, "Have you many briefs on hand, young man?"

Horace Gerold had not a single brief on hand. He was just then awaiting the return of this very Claude Febvre to make his *début* at the bar in the character of second junior in an action for damages against a railway company. He colored; but, the sense of his professional dignity rising uppermost within him, he answered quietly, "If you want assistance, Monsieur, I dare say, I shall be able to give it you."

"What's your name?" asked the stranger.

"My name's Horace Gerold."

"Ah! I thought I'd seen those eyes somewhere. Come you along with me, young man. We two are friends. Have you ever heard of Nestor Roche?"

"Yes, indeed," exclaimed Horace stopping. "My brother and I called upon him twice by our father's special desire; but he was not at home either time,—that is," added Horace smiling, "he was at home both times; but once, when we called at twelve, we were told he was in bed; and the other time, when we went at three, he was breakfasting; so we merely left cards."

"Yes: so would you be in bed at twelve if you were editing a paper till six in the morning," rejoined the man with the hat queerly. "But give me your hand. I was glad to see your honest cards on the table. Next time you write to your father, tell him, from me, that there's not a man I esteem more under heaven. Come along now, and I'll tell you about this case. You shall plead it for me."

It was a very hearty grip, something like a bear's, which he gave the young man. He then slipped his arm through his, and the two went together to a form in a corner of the Hall, where they could talk over matters in quiet. Horace, though a little chagrined that a man so worthy as Nestor Roche was known to be should wear so eccentric a hat, was pleased to have met his father's friend, and the prospect of now handling a first brief added very naturally to his elation.

"Look here," began Nestor Roche, drawing a copy of his paper, "*La Sentinelle*," from his pocket. "My gazette's got into hot water. It would never get into hot water if I alone wrote in it; for though there's not a line I pen but what's against the Government, I'm an old hand, you see, and know how to steer clear. However, some of the others are not so wary, and the other day one of my young ones, Max Delormay,

who does the 'Echoes,' wrote this note, which I didn't read carefully enough before it went into print; so that now we've got an action for libel on us in the Correctional Court. It's all my fault, for Delormay wouldn't be supposed to know; in fact nobody does know what's libel, and what's not, until he's written twenty years. Of course we shall be convicted, so I don't ask you to try for an acquittal. The '*Sentinelle*,' an opposition journal edited by a Republican, and tried before three Imperialist judges without jury, for attacking an Imperialist stock-jobber, has no more chance of being let off than if I'd been caught in the act of firing at the Emperor's carriage. Delormay and I shall each get three months' imprisonment; that's what we shall get: there'll be a fine into the bargain; and as the plaintiff has laid his damages at a hundred thousand francs, I expect the judges will award at least ten thousand. All that, however, is of no consequence; those are the risks of journalism, like the breakages in a china-shop; and I shall be able to edit my paper just as well in the prison of *Sainte Pélagie* as in the *Rue Montmartre*. But I'll tell you what I wish you to do. You must show in your speech that we've no personal rancor against this fellow whom Delormay has attacked; that we have merely hit at him as one of a disreputable class who are growing rank as weeds under this precious Second Empire of ours. Make of this affair one of commercial morality. Argue that it is the duty of the Press to expose people like this fellow, who rob the public just as truly as if they stood on a highway road and rifled the pockets of the passers-by. These are the facts:—A very loose fish named—but look, here is the note; you can read it for yourself."

Nestor Roche pointed with his finger to a passage of "*La Sentinelle*" in which figured the following lines:—

"We have noticed two very interesting items of news in yesterday's '*Moniteur*': the first announcing that a certain Monsieur Isidore Macrobe has been appointed Knight of the Imperial Order of the Legion of Honor, and the second proclaiming through the advertisement-columns that the same M. Isidore Macrobe has been elected one of the directors of the new *Société du Crédit Parisien*. We have no wish to say anything unpleasant either to the Members of the Legion of Honor or to the shareholders of the *Crédit*; but before congratulating the former on their new colleague, and the latter on their fresh director, we confess we should be glad to know whether this M. Isidore Macrobe is the same Isidore Macrobe who was declared a bankrupt in Paris

in 1835, in London three years later, and in Brussels in 1842; whether he is the same M. Macrobe who, having returned to Paris in 1843, singularly well off after his third bankruptcy, at once revealed himself to the world as Treasurer of a *Compagnie Générale du Pavage Départemental*, which Company never paved any thing, but collapsed in 1845 — that is, some months after M. Macrobe had with striking foresight resigned his post of Treasurer, and, as we understand, sold his shares at a most advantageous premium; whether it was this M. Macrobe again who, in 1846, bloomed out afresh as Treasurer of the *Société de l'Eclairage Rustique*, which did rather less in the way of lighting than the other had done in the way of paving, and from which M. Macrobe retired, as before, in time to avoid the catastrophe which soon after befell the shareholders; and finally, whether it is this M. Macrobe who, in 1848, being a zealous republican, obtained of the Provisional Government a contract for supplying all the country mairies with plaster statues of the Republic, which statues have never been beheld to this day, although there is no mention of M. Macrobe having ever refunded the twenty thousand francs which he received on account. It is a correspondent who has suggested that we should ask these questions, and we do so in the hope that they will elicit an answer. If all the Isidore Macrobes just alluded to form but one individual, it will remain with us to speculate what can be the claims of this gentleman to be rewarded with an order of merit, and to act as director to a company which we had hitherto believed to be a *bonâ-fide* enterprise."

Horace had not been able to suppress a slight exclamation at reading the name of Macrobe, and when he had finished he said to Nestor Roche: "I know this man a little; he's a partner in the firm of Lecoq and Roderheim, with which my father banks."

"Oh, you know him! will that prevent your giving him a dressing?" inquired the editor.

"Not the least," rejoined Horace. "If all this is true, the man deserves to be shown up, and I think M. Delormay was quite right in exposing him."

"Well, I don't quite know about that," grumbled Nestor Roche, removing his monumental covering, and rubbing the gray, bristly head under it with a perplexed air. "You must stick to that line of arguing in your defence; but, between us both, if newspapers set themselves to unmasking all the Macrobes in Paris, they'd have to issue a special edition every morning. I shouldn't have let in the paragraph at all if I'd been awake when I read it; but Delormay gen-

erally takes things so quietly that I didn't expect to see him fire out in this way, and so glanced at his note with only half an eye. The whole thing's true, though; for I remember all about those plaster statues of Liberty which were to replace the busts of Louis Philippe; but the fact of its being true doesn't matter, for French law, as you've learned, won't allow a defendant in libel to furnish proof. No, the job's a bad one for us; and it'll be useless to ask for any mitigation of penalty; but, if you think you can manage it, I shouldn't be sorry to see M. Macrobe get a first-class lashing. Since he's rammed us into a corner, he may as well have the benefit of all the mauling we can give him."

Horace assented, told the Editor briefly all he knew concerning M. Macrobe — which was very little — and inquired for what day the trial was fixed. It was down for hearing on the following Friday, that is, four days off, it being then a Monday; but as postponements of a week or fortnight can generally be obtained without difficulty as many as three or four times over, there was no actual reason why the case should come on for another six weeks.

"I wouldn't ask for too many postponements, though, if I were you," remarked Nestor Roche. "The judges are always as sulky as possible with our trade; and, besides, it doesn't look well asking for adjournments in a libel case; it gives the plaintiff the opportunity of bellowing that we're afraid of him. Be ready to face the fellow as soon as you can — without adjourning at all if possible."

Horace, not sorry that his first client should be as impatient of delay as he, readily promised that he would have the case at his fingers' ends by Friday morning. He was not likely to spare the midnight oil over a maiden brief, and would have worked without any sleep at all for the next three days if needful. Nestor Roche gave him the address of his solicitor, with a laconic recommendation, however, not to follow the instructions of that luminary, solicitors being temporizers by nature, addicted to adjournments, and devoid of taste for stand-up fighting. He added, that he himself was always to be seen from three in the afternoon to three in the morning inclusively; and matters being thus pleasantly settled, he observed he must be off, gave another grip to Horace, buried his hands in his pockets and was gone, with as much unconcern as if he had been ordering a new pair of shoes, instead of preparing to face three months' imprisonment.

That day was marked with a white stone by the two brothers, and assuredly they are the happiest days in our lives, those on

which we first see our way to earning our own living. A first article or a first picture accepted, a maiden brief, a maiden fee — these are joys which may well console those whose lot it is to struggle, for not having been born with golden spoons in their mouths. Emile was as elated at his brother's piece of luck as Horace could be; he made no doubt that now his brother had got a foot in the stirrup he would quickly ride away to fame. But this was not all. Emile did not confine himself to mere congratulations; he was anxious, so far as in him lay, to help in assuring Horace's success. During the whole evening he pored over libel cases in records of French jurisprudence, and, the following morning slipped out early, without saying where he was going, and remained absent till dinner-time. When he returned he handed his brother a paper, covered with precise notes as to M. Isidore Macrobe's career. He had spent his day in the public library of the Rue Richelieu, consulting the files of the French and Belgium "Moniteurs" and of "The London Gazette" and had acquired proof indisputable as to the worthy financier's three bankruptcies. Further, he had been to call upon two members of the Provisional Government of 1848, and both had assured him that the details as to the statue contract were perfectly correct, though one of them added that the unlucky "Sentinelle" had placed itself altogether in the wrong box, for that suspicious bankruptcies, suspicious stock-jobbing, and suspicious practice with regard to Government contracts, were only accounted stigmas when a man was ruined by them. This, too, was Manuel Gerold's rather sorrowful view. Horace had written to give him an account of the case, and on the very morning of the trial he received an answer, in which the old tribune said: "I am not sorry, my dear boy, that you should win your spurs in defending my old friend Nestor Roche, neither am I in any way concerned that you should be obliged to attack that curious M. Macrobe, well-wisher of mine though he profess to be. At the same time, let me warn you that, from the world's point of view, your clients have not a leg to stand on. Society — especially Second Empire society — will always be averse to having ugly truths raked up against a man who has made his way. Nothing that you can say against M. Macrobe will affect his reputation in the least. He will leave the court with a high head, and pocket poor Nestor Roche's damages with as much coolness as if the money were owing to him."

There was another person whose opinions in the matter of the libel leaned much rather towards law than equity, and that was the excellent M. Pochemolle. Coming home

on the eve of the trial, after receiving one or two final instructions from the Editor, Horace was stopped by the honest draper, who dragged him by the sleeve into his shop, and said, in tones of dismay: "Dear me, M. Horace, what's this I hear — that you're going to speak against M. Macrobe? It can't be true, come now" —

And Madame Pochemolle, behind her counter, chimed in with the exclamation: "Such a civil young gentleman as you are, M. Horace; I'm sure you wouldn't say harm against anybody."

It took the good couple some time to understand that a man could actually reconcile it with his conscience to assail so extremely respectable a person as M. Macrobe. It was Mademoiselle Georgette who had first discovered in the paper the paragraph which said: "The trial of 'La Sentinelle,' in the person of its editor, printer, and of M. Max Delormay, a member of the staff, for libelling M. Macrobe, of the banking firm of Lecoq, Roderheim and Macrobe, will take place on Friday. Maître Giboulet is retained for the plaintiff, Maître Horace Gerold will appear for the defence." For a while M. Pochemolle had clung to the saving hope that this might be a mistake, or that there were two Horace Gerolds, or that the names had been interverted; the correct reading being — Giboulet for the defence and Gerold for the plaintiff; but when Horace avowed without a blush that the announcement was perfectly correct, M. Pochemolle called to mind the words of solemn warning he had uttered to the young men at the sight of David's picture, and reflected that the present incident was a realization of his worst forebodings. Nothing but association with Republicans could ever have seduced a well-nurtured and generally quiet youth into taking part with a subversive print against a gentleman who paid ready-money, and had, as it was affirmed, at least two hundred thousand francs a year. He hoped that no harm would come of it, but it was his experience that bad beginnings generally led to evil ends.

So spake M. Pochemolle, his wife assenting with a sigh; and had it not been for Mademoiselle Georgette, Horace would have been condemned *nem. con.* by the worthy household. But Georgette Pochemolle, who was accustomed to speak her mind, and who, besides, felt an interest in the two rising barristers (as what young woman will not feel an interest in a couple of young men who pass by the window several times a day, and on each occasion favor her with a bow?) — Georgette Pochemolle quietly confronted her scandalized father, in defence of the incriminated

youth: "For," said she, "what if this M. Macrobe deserves to be spoken against, why shouldn't M. Horace do it as much as anybody else?" A mild query, which caused M. Pochemolle to stand bolt still, and answer, with all the dignity he could command, "Mademoiselle, I am surprised that you should join in the cry against one of your father's most valued customers. When you grow to be older, you will learn that those who become rich are always pursued by the animosity of the envious. Let it be enough for you that M. Macrobe enjoys my personal esteem and that of his sovereign, who has just rewarded him with the Cross of Honor."

Georgette went on with her stitching, but scolding never yet convinced a woman.

It must be confessed, however, that neither his father's predictions nor the draper's lamentations much dampened Horace Gerold. Of all the godsend which could befall a French barrister in the year 1854, that most to be prayed for was a brief in a political trial. At a time when public meetings were prohibited, when people held their tongues under double chain and padlock, when even the parliamentary debates were a secret, it was something for a man to have the opportunity of standing up in a full court and giving vent to whatever pent-up liberalism there might be in him. Not a few barristers would have cheerfully bartered one of their ears for such a chance; for, if taken good advantage of, it meant simply reputation, honor, and possibly fortune. No great talent, in fact no talent at all, was needed; all that was required was boldness. Talent is of use when a cause has to be won, but in 1854 the results of all press trials were known beforehand. Barristers accepted the defence of prosecuted journalists, not with any hope of obtaining an acquittal—that they were aware would have been an idle dream—but with the view to making sensation speeches, which should bring them into notice. Horace was in no way ignorant of this particular, and the more he thought over the matter the more clearly did he perceive that Nestor Roche had thrown an occasion in his way such as did not often fall to a pleader of but a few months' standing. It is true that the trial in which he was engaged was not strictly a political one, being virtually nothing more than an action for imprisonment and damages brought by a private person. But political is an elastic word; in France, where one of the parties to a suit is an Imperialist and the other a Radical, the judge would be a phoenix who kept politics out of the question.

Need it be said that Horace was up with

the dawn on the morning of the famous Friday; and shall we blame him if he paid much more than ordinary attention to his toilet? Always neat—a dandy even for the Bar—he put himself this time into black, eschewing the gray trousers habitual to the younger members of his profession; and selected the stiffest of his shirt-collars, no doubt so as to be on a level with the luminaries of the judgment seat. He had not slept very soundly the night before, neither had Emile. The latter, quietly busy to the last, had remained working till long after midnight, and had compiled about twenty foolscap pages of notes, full of intelligent arguments and precedents drawn from past libel cases. "You would have managed this case better than I," said Horace affectionately, as he glanced through this labor of love. Emile had neglected nothing; the notes were plainly written in the darkest ink, and blank spaces were left between each, so that they might more easily catch the eye if consulted in a hurry; with patient thoughtfulness an appendix had been added to help in ready reference to the rest of the work.

Just as the two brothers were going to set out, soon after nine, Georgette Pochemolle came running up with a letter. By the way, it was not Mademoiselle Georgette's business to bring up letters, but the postman, when pressed for time, frequently made mistakes and left lodgers' letters in the shop along with the Pochemolle correspondence, instead of delivering them to the *concierge* at the private door. On such occasions Mademoiselle Georgette, with her father's sanction, would often run up stairs with the missive, and be rewarded with, "How good of you to take so much trouble!" or "We're really ashamed to put you to so much inconvenience," which would make her sometimes say to herself that these Messieurs Gerold, especially the eldest—for it was commonly he who spoke—were certainly very well-bred young men.

The letter Mademoiselle Georgette brought was rather a curious one: it came from the imperturbable M. Macrobe:—

"MY DEAR M. HORACE: I just hear that you are retained for the defence in my affair with the 'Sentinelle.' Bad business for Roche—I am talking of the libel. He'll be knocked down in heavy damages, and I reckon the costs will be bigish; but I'm glad we've got an honorable adversary like you against us. Of course the whole story of the 'Sentinelle' is a lie; but I don't ask you to believe it from me. I only write to prove there's no rancor. We who've made money are accustomed to hitting from

those who haven't—I don't say that for you, but for Roche.

"I shake your hand cordially,

"ISADORE MACROBE.

"By-the-by, you've not yet kept your promise about calling. You know we've removed since I last saw you. Our present address is 294 Avenue des Champs Elysées. Easily find the house: two statues of naked boys with goats'-legs playing on the flute outside."

Horace crumpled up this calm epistle, laughing, and threw it into the fire.

"He's cool enough, at all events," said Emile with a smile. And the two brothers set off together for the palace.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A FIRST SPEECH.

A ROOM forty feet long by twenty, wainscoted with light oak, and papered above the wainscot in green, studded with gold bees. Twelve rows of seats on either side of a passage running down the whole length of the room, and leading to a dais raised two feet from the floor. On the dais, a table covered with green baize, and three arm-chairs. To the left of the dais a low pulpit, to the right a dock. On the wall, in guise of ornament, a clock, and a bust, in marble, of the sovereign—the bust faces the dock, the clock shows its face to the pulpit. Over the dais a life-sized picture of the Saviour on the cross, the arms stretched out in ghastly whiteness, and the forehead bloody from the crown of thorns. Add to this a fire-stove near the door, three glistening pewter inkstands with three black blotting-books on the dais table, a fourth inkstand and blotting-book in the pulpit, and you will have the Sixth Chamber of Correctional Police.

From ten o'clock till four, five days out of the week, thieves and swindlers are put to confusion there. On Fridays the thieves and swindlers only remain in possession till noon; at noon come the journalists, and the procession of them generally lasts till six. Sometimes the journalists are too numerous to be disposed of in an afternoon, and then the Wednesday is considerably set apart for them. Justice shows her respect for the Press by making the thieves and swindlers wait.

From 1852 to 1860 Press trials took place with closed doors: that is, none but the defendants, plaintiffs, witnesses, and

members of the Bar were allowed to be present. Things were conducted snugly *en famille*; and when the trial was over, the papers were allowed to publish the indictment and the judgment, but not the speeches for the defence, or the depositions of the witnesses. This last precaution, intended to safeguard the public against the spirit of partiality that might accrue from hearing both sides of the question, is in force to this day; but the regulation which kept the public out of court has been kindly abrogated. There is nothing now to prevent people from going to admire how justice is meted out to the pen tribe.

Thus, in 1854, the trial of Macrobe v. Roche ought to have been pleaded with three judges, Monsieur the Public Prosecutor, and a few desultory barristers, for sole spectators. So said the law, and so said the besworded Municipal Guards, who kept watch at the door, inflexibly keeping back the curious, and disdaining blandishments, supplications, and bribes alike. But in France laws have from all time been much easier to make than to enforce, and there was one method by which one could elude both the vigilance of the "municipals" without the court and that of the ushers within. The way was simply this: to shave off one's beard and mustache, if one possessed such appendages, and to hire a barrister's cap, gown, and bands, of the robe-man at the Palace. It was impossible that the "municipals" could know the features of all the members of the Bar; the shaven or plain-whiskered face, with the cap and gown, were their only clews; they had no power to keep out barristers, and so in you walked. Press trials were such an attraction that a good many journalists kept themselves permanently shaved, so as to have the privilege of going to hear their compeers condemned of a Friday. The judges more than suspected the infringement, but were obliged to wink at it. One of them—a cantankerous judge—had tried to put a stop to the evil; but the "municipals" at the door are not a pre-eminently intelligent body, and when told to be extra careful, they kept out real barristers as well as spurious. This had led to complications. The Conseil de l'Ordre des Avocats had remonstrated, and demanded an apology. Judges don't like to apologize; and so the upshot of it was, that the shaven journalists remained masters of the situation.

On Friday afternoons the Sixth Chamber was always crowded. When Horace Gerold arrived the repunctually at twelve with his brother, he found it so crammed that there would not have been standing-room for a magpie.

You may be sure his heart throbbed as he threaded his way down the gloomy passage that led from the Salle des Pas Perdus to the grim sanctum of the Correctional Police, over the door of which might be read this significant couplet:—

*Hic scelerum ultrices Præse posuere tribunal ;  
Sontibus unde timor, civibus inde salus.\**

He thought everybody was staring at him, and a good many of his legal brethren were doing so; for they deemed him a lucky dog, wondering rather sceptically whether he would do justice to his luck, and, in any case, envied him cordially. The case had brought together not only a mob of journalists, but a powerful squad of moneyed men, many of whom had resorted early to the cap, gown, and bands expedient, and had managed to squeeze into court. The remainder thronged outside with such journalists—and they were the majority—who were too well pleased with their mustaches to sacrifice them, and with those of the genuine barristers, who, less fortunate than their pseudo-colleagues, had been unable to find a place. Money-men, pen-men, and law-men were making a fearful hubbub, and exchanging observations, interjections, and epigrams at the top of their voices, as the fashion is amongst Frenchmen. Everybody was perfectly good-humored. The gentlemen of the Bourse laughed very pleasantly at the squibs of wit launched by the gentlemen of the quill against the profession of stock and share jobbing; but they retaliated with genial irony, and the ejaculations "Oh! oh!" "Ah! ah!" succeeded each other apace when a burly journalist, known throughout Paris as the editor of an extremely lively print conducted on the strictest catch-penny principles, put in a remark about the sacerdotal mission of the Press. It should be owned that the eyes of the corpulent editor twinkled somewhat as he ventured upon these tall words, which in his mouth were hailed as an amazingly good joke by the bystanders.

In the centre of one of the noisiest groups the two brothers descried the stupendous hat of Nestor Roche, his baggy clothes and naively grim face. The editor of "*La Sentinelle*" was talking about some recent Crimean battle, and evincing the most supreme indifference as to what was going to happen to him personally that afternoon. Nevertheless, on catching sight of the Gerolds, he held out a hand to each, and introduced them without more ado to a

good-looking companion of his, whom he announced as "the young one who has shoved us into the wasp's nest—Max Delormay." The brothers had both been several times to the office of the "*Sentinelle*" during the two or three past days, and had quite made the acquaintance of M. Roche; but they had never met M. Max Delormay, who seldom turned up for purposes of work until ten o'clock P.M. He lifted his hat and thanked Horace with effusion for the trouble the latter was going to take in defending him; but it did not seem as though the prospect of losing his liberty for a certain length of time, weighed very heavily on his mind. M. Max D. was the cynosure of a small circle of admiring *confrères*, in whose eyes he had become a sort of oracle ever since he had been fortunate enough to drag his paper into a legal conflict. *Non cuius contingit adire Corinthum*: it is not every journalist whose editor will give a chance of figuring in the Sixth Chamber. Monsieur Max was not unaware of this, and there was an expression of modest contentment on his features, as on those of a man who feels conscious that fortune is dealing kindly with him.

Nestor Roche took Horace by the arm and drew him aside.

"Max didn't mean any harm against that fellow Macrobe," he whispered; "he published the questions of a correspondent without knowing that they would stir up this shindy. However, mind and stick to the commercial-morality line of defence—and give it our adversaries hard. We must make political capital out of the affair."

He said this simply, without excitement, and then turned to resume his talk about the Crimean battle. But in a few minutes an usher put his head out of the court and announced that the judges were coming in; which was a signal for witnesses to proceed to the waiting-room, and for the defendants with their counsel to go and take their seats. The crowd instantly made way to let Horace and his brother pass; the unmoved Nestor Roche and Max Delormay followed; and behind them came a lean and melancholy printer, who stood included in the indictment.

The solemn stillness of a court of justice, succeeding immediately to the noisy chattering of three or four dozen glib-tongued loungers, has something of the same effect as a bath of cold water in collecting the senses. Horace Gerold's head had been on the whirl all the morning—anxiety, impatience, and expectation all combining to make him restless and feverish. In the eyes of most frequenters of the Palace it was a very ordinary press suit that

\* The court labelled with this inscription has since become that of Correctional Appeal; the Sixth Chamber has been removed into the new buildings in the Cour de la Sainte Chapelle.



was going to be tried; to him the Sixth Chamber was a gambling-house, in which he was going to take his first throw with the dice. From ten till twelve he had been pacing up and down the Salle des Pas Perdue, rehearsing the main points of his speech with Emile, and stifling occasional qualms of nervousness by calling all his vanity and young ambition to his aid. A congratulatory shake of the hand or two from several of his friends, an encouraging nod and smile from one of the "great guns," who had said to him, "This is your maiden-speech day, isn't it, Gerold? I wish you success," and the flattering hums of "That's young Gerold." "That's the fellow who's going to defend the 'Sentinelle,'" which he had heard in the crowd outside the court, had been so many circumstances that had helped to buoy him up like corks in his small sea of glory. He did not regain complete and cool possession of his head until he found himself seated, with his brother to the right of him, Nestor Roche's solicitor to the left, and the three judges of the Correctional Court enthroned opposite him on their dais.

A deep silence, and business at once commenced. Not a moment was lost in vain formalities. The chief judge of the three—a florid magistrate, with a deal of starch, silk cassock, and red ribbon about him—lifted up a white hand, armed with a gold pencil-case, and said, in a voice agreeable as the abrupt closing of a steel-trap, "The first case is that of the 'Journal de la Reforme,' for exciting to hatred and contempt of the Government. Are the parties here?"

Up jumped a slim barrister from close to where Horace was sitting, and mumbled a request for adjournment on grounds only audible to himself. The pencil of the chief judge traced a mark on the Cause List, and the trap-like voice rejoined, "Adjourned for a week. But this is your third adjournment, Maître Gribouille: we shall not grant you another. The second case is 'La Gazette des Boulevards,' for false news."

The figure of the corpulent editor who talked about the sacerdotal mission of the press, leaned forward suddenly and whispered something in the ear of a barrister with a red face. This man of law rose in an off-hand style, and, with his tongue in his cheek, intimated that he was unprepared, having only been instructed last Monday week. At this a square-set form, hitherto imbedded in the folds of a black gown trimmed with ermine, started up in the pulpit facing Horace, and an indignant face, ornamented with a pair of blue spectacles, cried, "I oppose the adjournment."

"Monsieur le Procureur Impérial opposes," snapped the steel trap; "the case shall proceed."

"Then we will let judgment go by default," replied he with the tongue in his cheek! "we can't plead if we're not ready."

There was a general grin, for he with the tongue in his cheek was a legal wag, and his client, the fat editor of the "Gazette des Boulevards," was a favorite. But the public prosecutor hereupon leaped up again.

"Maître Carrotte," said he, "I shall not allow judgment to go by default. Your client, M. de Tirecruchon, is in court at this moment: if he does not stand forward and plead immediately, I shall request the bench to have him arrested and put into the dock."

"Usher, let no one leave the court," cried the chief judge significantly.

The grinning stopped. The fat editor, looking slightly blue, was seen leaning over and conversing again with the red-faced barrister. The latter, no longer with his tongue in his cheek, then stood up and expostulated meekly. He knew that the prosecution would be perfectly justified in taking the course proposed; but he relied upon the well-known courtesy of Monsieur le Procureur Impérial, upon his generous indulgence, upon his universally acknowledged sense of justice, to grant just one more week's respite; and he looked piteously towards the pulpit.

Monsieur the public prosecutor, having vindicated his importance, which was probably all he wanted to do, was graciously pleased to unbend before Maître Carrotte's humility. He announced that he withdrew his opposition for this once, but that such an act of condescension must not be taken as a precedent. Maître Carrotte restored his tongue to its original position in his cheek. The chief judge made a second mark on the cause list with his gold pencil-case, and, for the third time, the steel-trap snapped out: "The next case is *Macrobe versus Roche, Delormay, and Dutison*; action for libel. Are the parties here?"

There was no immediate reply, for Maître Giboulet, the counsel for the plaintiff, being a great gun, had thought it incumbent upon his dignity to remain talking outside until he was being actually waited for. An usher had to go out and call him, and in a minute he came flustering in at the rate of eight miles an hour, mopping his brow with a cambric handkerchief, and followed by a brace of juniors with bags. "I'm for the plaintiff, Mr. President," he shouted, lifting his square cap and planting it on his head again.

Horace Gerold stood up, and, as firmly

as he could, said, "And I'm for the defendants."

"The case is opened," proclaimed the chief judge, and in another few seconds Maître Giboulet had started full gallop into his indictment.

As this is a record of the life and adventures of the two Gerolds, and not a chronicle destined to perpetuate the eloquence of the French bar, it will be as well to make no more than a passing mention of all the fine things which Maître Giboulet said, and of all that part of the trial which included the examination of the plaintiff, defendants, and witnesses by the trap-voiced judge. To those who know how these things are managed in France, it is quite needless to explain that Maître Giboulet, who was an Imperialist and an official member of the legislature, animadverted with a great deal of warmth upon that base-born spirit of envy which attached itself to men who had rapidly attained wealth by dint of hard work and enterprise. Yet he did not rant, for he was a good orator,—albeit the chief use to which he put his tongue in the legislative chamber was to cry "Bravo! bravo!" when the ministers spoke. He referred in a few feeling words to the spotless and industrious career of his client, to the esteem in which he was held in all financial circles, "and also by his Majesty the Emperor himself, Mr. President, as you will see when he comes into court by the ribbon of honor on his breast." He then made a brief allusion to the newly founded *Société du Crédit Parisien*, which was to confer priceless boons upon humanity, and the shares of which were already at three hundred francs premium; and he concluded by a dignified protest against the licentiousness of the press, and a prayer that justice would safeguard the sanctity of private life, and indemnify his client by heavy damages for a libel at once groundless, heartless, and malicious.

Maître Giboulet sat down, and a few of the money-men, who had crept in with borrowed plumes, mumbled "*Très bien!*" the begowned journalists retorting by crying "Hush!" and "Silence!" with great zeal, though with good humor. The cross-questioning of the defendants was then commenced by the presiding judge, who, being an old hand, conducted matters roundly and with a rigid impartiality of which I will try and give an idea.

To Nestor Roche. — "Stand up, sir; your name?"

Nestor Roche. — "My profession is journalism; my address Rue Montmartre."

"Why do you libel honest men?"

"I never libelled an honest man."

"I beg, sir, you won't split straws with me. You have slandered an honest gentleman, a knight of the Legion of Honor, a director of one of the greatest financial companies in Paris; you can have had but one motive, that of sordid envy; and I advise you, if you hope for the indulgence of the court, to make an unreserved apology. On consulting the record of your antecedents, I find you have been imprisoned four times for press offences; twice under the present reign, and twice under the last; you are evidently a danger to society. What have you to say for yourself?"

"That what you call a libel is a true statement. I" —

"Monsieur Roche, I cannot suffer you to bring into court the slanders which you have already endeavored to propagate through your journal. Your misdemeanor is aggravated by this display of effrontery. Stand down!"

The next to come up was M. Max Delormay. Now, M. Max had made up his mind to be very downright and cutting. This is what his resolution came to: —

"Monsieur Delormay, I find you are twenty-five, and the only son of a mother who has tried to bring you up as a respectable member of society. On coming to Paris five years ago, the kindness of Monsieur le Préfet de la Seine obtained for you an appointment as clerk at the Hôtel de Ville; but, last year, you left your place. Were you discharged for misconduct?"

M. Delormay (hotly). — "Certainly not. Who has dared to insinuate such a falsehood? I resigned because I earned only two thousand francs a year, and could gain more than double by my pen."

"Exactly. You preferred the disreputable gains to be had by libelling your betters to the modest salary obtainable by labor in an honorable career. Don't interrupt me, sir; I know what I'm saying. What business has a young man of your age to insult one superior to him in years, social position, and worth? It's a cowardly thing, do you hear, sir? But you may stand down. Your attitude sufficiently shows that I may appeal in vain to you for a spark of contrition and good feeling."

And so down went M. Max, looking very much as if he would like to say something, though too nonplussed to put that something into words.

Next came M. Dutison, the lean and melancholy printer, who observed, dolefully, that seven daily newspapers and eight weekly ones were printed on his premises, and that, with the best intentions in the world, it was utterly beyond his powers to revise them all. He was disposed of in the following terms: —

"Monsieur Dutison, I informed you, when last you were here, that this excuse was shallow and frivolous. A printer should ponder over every line of manuscript before submitting it to his presses. He should be the paternal censor of all the writings put into his hands."

"Yes, and see all his customers go and get their printing done elsewhere," ejaculated M. Dutison, with dismal irony.

"Sir, an honest printer would be consoled for the loss of custom by the possession of a blameless conscience."

M. Dutison seemed to consider this solace insufficient, and was sent back to his seat, with the gratifying assurance that, if he would only wait till by and by, he would see what would happen to him. The presiding judge then called the name of Prosper Macrobe, and the plaintiff was introduced, irreproachably dressed, be-gloved, smugly shaven, and looking the image incarnate of respectability. In the topmost button-hole of his frock-coat flashed a spick-span new piece of scarlet ribbon. He cast a quick glance round the room, leisurely drew off one of his black gloves, and, catching sight, of Horace, nodded as amicably to him as if the two had been breakfasting together.

Wondrous was the transformation which the features, voice, and manner of the presiding judge now underwent.

"Monsieur Macrobe, will you be so kind as to answer the usual questions as to name and profession? They are a mere formality."

And, saying this, the steel-trap became softened as though it had been oiled, whilst a deferential smirk irradiated the thin lips of the speaker.

Monsieur Macrobe evinced no objection to furnish all the explanations that were required of him. He briefly stated who he was, hinted that he was uncommonly rich, and hesitated for some polite term by which he could intimate that he cared not two brass stivers what was said about him. The judge was evidently unwilling to keep a man of such parts long on his legs, and, after a couple of totally insignificant questions, would have dismissed him; but Emile, whose usually placid face had been settling into the rigidity of contempt under the influence of this burlesque of justice, nudged his brother and whispered, "Up at him, and cross-question him."

Horace Gerold had been undergoing during ten minutes a sort of wet-blanket infliction from the solicitor on his left, who, in despair at the youth of his client's advocate, repeated mistrustfully, yet with depressing persistency, "Mind and be prudent, Monsieur Gerold — mind and be

prudent." At his brother's exhortation, Horace at once shook off this dotard, and, starting up, looked the plaintiff full in the face, and said, "Monsieur Macrobe, remember you are on your oath. Is it or is it not true that you have been thrice bankrupt? that you obtained a contract which" —

He could get no further. The blue-spectacled visage of Monsieur le Procureur Impérial leaped up in the pulpit like a jack-in-the-box, crying, "I protest!" The two minor judges, aghast with astonishment, exclaimed, "Order!" The presiding judge, quivering with the anger of outraged majesty, shouted, "Maitre Gerold, I recall you to the respect you owe the court. You well know that it is against all rules for the Bar to interrogate a witness otherwise than through the Bench."

Poor Horace apologized. He had, indeed, forgotten this important rule. Reddening, and a little dashed, he resumed, "Will the Bench kindly ask the plaintiff whether" —

"I shall do no such thing, sir," broke in the chief judge, indignantly; and the Public Prosecutor, without any such expression of his opinion being called for, rose anew, and cried, "I move that the question is altogether out of place. The *Code* lays down that, in cases of libel, it shall not be allowable for the defendants to adduce proofs of their asseverations.\* Besides," added the Procureur, with triumphant logic, "even if the defendants possessed the privilege, it would be of no use to them, for we are entirely convinced that their assertions are false."

"Precisely so," assented the chief judge; "the libel is false and malicious, and it is against all law that the defendants should seek to establish the contrary."

Emile turned pale with disgust, and bit his lips savagely. As for Horace, the blood had flowed to his head; he made a couple of steps forward, and for half a moment it looked as if there was going to be a disturbance in court; but the cautious solicitor sprang up in terror, and pulled him back by the gown. "Oh! be prudent, M. Gerold — be prudent," said he. Horace turned with flashing eyes to Nestor Roche, who was seated behind him. "What am I to do?" he asked.

"Do nothing," answered the other, coolly. "Wait till it's your turn to speak, and then pitch in to everybody."

Horace sank into his place. The non-chalance of Nestor Roche discouraged him.

\* This law was repealed by the National Assembly in 1871; but only so far as libels against Government functionaries are concerned. A writer libelling a private person is still denied the right of proving that his libel is a truth.

Whilst his liberty was being weighed in the balances of Imperial justice, the Editor was unconcernedly writing a leading article in his note-book with an odd bit of pencil.

Neither of the parties desiring to call witnesses, the fluent Maitre Giboulet at once set about delivering a second edition of his opening speech. He thanked the Bench for its impartiality; declared magnanimously that he bore no grudge against his young friend and adversary, Maitre Gerold, for having made an abortive attempt to envenom the discussion; and renewed his impressive yet temperate appeal for substantial damages. Everybody admitted that it was a very gentleman-like speech. Maitre Giboulet was succeeded by the Public Prosecutor. As this functionary is supposed to intervene on behalf of whichever party he may, after honest consideration, deem aggrieved, it was only natural that he should inveigh with splendid energy against the defendants. "For, indeed," said he, with honest wrath, "who is there among us that would not revolt at the idea of having all his past life disclosed? What hope is there for any honorable man, if papers are suffered to reveal all he said or did ten or twenty years ago? The press, gentlemen, is becoming each day more and more a danger; the landmarks of society must soon be swept away if it be not kept in check. M. Prosper Macrobe will leave the court with the warmest sympathies of all upright minds, whilst his libellers will be branded forever with the stigma of indelible shame."

M. le Procureur was always overpoweringly eloquent in anathematizing periodical literature. It is surprising what a number of prints and journalists he had branded with the stigma of indelible shame.

And now came the important moment when Horace Gerold was to speak. The Public Prosecutor had embedded himself anew in his pulpit, well content with his own oration, and after the usual amount of buzzing, foot-scraping, and coughing that succeeds the delivery of half an hour's speech, a deep hush pervaded the court. The defence is the episode *par excellence* of a press trial. In this instance, too, those who knew the name of the council were a little curious to see how the son of the Tribune Gerold would demean himself.

The beginning was not very promising. For the first time in his life, Horace experienced that disagreeable, and totally indescribable sensation of perceiving every eye in a crowded room fixed on him. Till he opened his mouth, he would never have believed that he could so falter and stammer, and longed that the floor might yawn and

swallow him. He had counted on an easy triumph, for he was full of his subject; but on rising, and hearing the unearthly echo of his own single voice, and feeling beside him the leaden weight of his two arms, which he knew not how to lift or move, all his ideas seemed to go as clean out of his head as though they had been wiped away with a sponge. To add to his composure, the chief judge took the occasion of hinting that he hoped the speech would not be long, as there was really no defence possible.

It was Emile who saved his brother from premature collapse by whispering energetically, "Well said," "That's it," "Perfect," &c. By so doing he drew down on himself the sharp censure of the Bench; but his welcome excitations helped Horace to bridge over the first few moments of emotion, after which the horrible fear of breaking down and becoming ridiculous acted like a tonic, and did the rest. The voice of the speaker, which had been running all wild, and scaling every note in the octave, from the husky to the shrill falsetto, gathered firmness and became controllable. Horace spoke spasmodically, but one by one his ideas returned. He kept his eyes fixed on those of a friend opposite him, whose changes of expression served him as beacons. Gradually he warmed to his subject; the trumps were all in his hand; arguments began to crowd upon him. A low murmur of approbation soon told him that he had struck upon the right path, and was making straight for the sympathies of his audience. The last remnant of nervousness forsook him. He spoke out flatly, plainly, fearlessly. The judges, who at first had thrown themselves back in their chairs, leaned forward and stared uneasily; the Public Prosecutor, who had affected to prepare himself for a quiet nap, glared from behind his blue spectacles as if he was getting more than he had bargained for. Encouraged, emboldened, Horace Gerold branched out from the main argument of his plea into an appeal of that kind which always finds an echo in Frenchmen, and which, in times of oppression, sets fire to them like tinder. He spoke of lost liberties, and there was a thrill. The dullest can be eloquent on such a theme; and young Gerold, who was not a dullard, threw out the burning words with a fervor of earnestness that quickly stirred his hearers to the marrow. There are crowds whom it takes a great deal to move; next to nothing is required to animate a French crowd. It seemed to some of the spectators present as though in the excited young orator before them, they saw the image of the rising generation standing forth to protest against the cowardice of its fathers which had

handed France over to slavery. A loud explosion of murmurs greeted an unwise attempt of the chief judge to check the speaker. The judge desisted, cowed; and from that moment the success of Horace Gerold was sealed. The arms no longer hung like lead now; they moved with the simple but magnificent gestures of scorn and defiance; the face was flushed, the hair thrown back; faster and faster fell the words, louder and braver grew the denunciations, until at last the speaker stopped amidst a tremendous uproar. Everybody in court had risen; enthusiastic cries of "Bravo" shook the rafters; the three judges, on their feet, and livid with rage were shouting, "You shall apologize!" Nestor Roche had rushed from out of his place and embraced Horace, kissing him on both cheeks, French fashion: Emile, with tears streaming from his eyes, was wringing his brother's hand and crying, "Well done, Horace; admirably spoken."

"You shall apologize," vociferated the Bench. "You said 'corrupt judges;' we will have an instant apology."

"Did I say 'corrupt judges?'" asked Horace, and indeed it was in perfect good faith he put the question, for he could not have told for the life of him what he had been saying.

"An instant apology!" roared the judges.

"An humble apology," yelped the Public Prosecutor.

Apologize at such a moment! Apologize when a score of hands were being stretched out to him, and tongues were repeating clamorously, "Bravo, bravo!" In a clear, ringing voice, Horace replied, "I shall never retract. I said 'corrupt judges,' and I maintain the term."

The Public Prosecutor immediately cried, "Maitre Gerold has been guilty of an outrageous contempt of court. I pray that the Bench will use its discretionary powers to punish him." There was no doubt about the contempt of court; the three judges caught up their caps, and swept out of the room by the door behind the dais to deliberate.

Impossible to describe the scene in court during their absence. Barristers, journalists, left their seats and scrambled over desks and forms, to cluster round Horace and shake hands with him. Half an hour before he had been a simple, struggling, and pretty nearly briefless advocate; now he was a hero. "Well said, indeed," "Your speech was inimitable," "You called the *coup-d'état* a crime; give me your hand; you're my friend." Such were a few amongst the hundred exclamations that rose like fuses from out of the transported throng. It was in vain that the ushers

sought to impose silence; they were bidden hold their peace, and jostled with ignominy — the noise was deafening. One must witness such a scene to realize it. In the midst of it all, as cool as a cucumber, M. Prosper Macrobe bustled forward, seized Horace's hand like the rest, and exclaimed, "My young friend, admiration knows no camp; splendid speech: always knew you'd make your way." At which the spectators around clapped their hands, thinking this was truly manly behavior on the financier's part. M. Macrobe had quite relied upon this impression; that enterprising man never laid out any thing save at interest.

At the end of twenty minutes the judges returned. Horace was perfectly aware that he was going to get his share of whatever penalty was in store, but this did not affect him in the least — neither, I fancy, did the other thought, that his fine speech had perhaps not done overmuch for his client's interest. There was no need to proclaim silence anew: the lull in the court was instantaneous. When the judges reached their place, one could have heard a gnat fly. The chief judge held two written judgments in his hand. Still white with rage, and in a loud, rasping voice, he read out the first: —

"Whereas the newspaper 'La Sentinelle' published in its number of the 15th April, 1855, a note beginning with the words, 'We noticed in yesterday's "Moniteur,"' and ending with the words 'a *bona-fide* enterprise;' and whereas the said note contains a wilful and malicious libel affecting the character and reputation of M. Prosper Macrobe;

"And whereas the said M. Prosper Macrobe never gave cause of just offence to the defendants, so that it is evident the libel can only proceed from a wanton spirit of mischief;

"Whereas the defendant, Max. Delormay, wrote the note, knowing it to be libellous;

"And the defendant, Nestor Roche, editor, inserted it in the newspaper 'La Sentinelle,' likewise knowing it to be libellous;

"And the defendant, Dutison, printer, rendered himself accessory to the misdemeanor by printing the said note:

"The Court,

"Conformably to the conclusions of the Public Prosecutor,

"Condemns

"Nestor Roche to six months' imprisonment, and a fine of five thousand francs;

"Max Delormay to six months' imprisonment, and a fine of five thousand francs:

"Dutison to two months' imprisonment, and a fine of two thousand francs ;

"And the three defendants conjointly to pay five and twenty thousand francs damages to the plaintiff, together with all the costs of the trial."

Then came the second judgment : —

"Whereas Maitre Horace Gerold, advocate, practising at the Imperial Court of Paris, did on the — th day of April, 1855, speaking in the Court of Correctional Police, render himself guilty of a gross contempt of court, by uttering words reflecting on the honor of the Magistracy ;

"And whereas the said Maitre Gerold, on being summoned to retract his words and tender an apology, refused to do so ;

"The Court,

"Conformably to the conclusions of the Public Prosecutor, and by virtue of its discretionary powers,

"Condemns

"Maitre Horace Gerold to be disbarred from pleading in any Court of the French Empire during a period of six months."

That evening Horace Gerold was the most talked-of man in all Paris.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SWEETS AND BITTERS OF POPULARITY.

POPULARITY does not come or go by halves in Paris ; it encircles or forsakes one with all the suddenness of a change of wind. Previously to Horace's sensation speech, the brothers had led very retired lives, paying few visits, and being themselves little visited, save by one or two young barristers of their own age, who had been their companions during their student-days. On the morrow of the speech there was not a café in Paris, not a club-house, not a drawing-room, where Horace Gerold was not the leading subject of conversation. For the moment, he supplanted Sebastopol, which the Allies were doing their very best to take, without succeeding.

It may seem strange that the maiden speech of an unknown barrister should have been able to effect such a commotion ; but stranger things than that used to happen in those days. Considered soberly, the speech was not a master-work. It failed a good deal in plain logic, and as a defence on behalf of accused men it was disastrous, for it had, without any doubt, caused the penalty

of the defendants to be doubled. But Horace had had the striking merit of speaking out the truth flatly at a moment when scarcely anybody dared speak at all. Herein lay his success.

He was also helped a good deal into public favor by the fact that the judges had disbarred him for six months. To get one's clients sentenced to six months' imprisonment instead of three is well — it is like inserting the thin end of the wedge ; but to get one's self disbarred into the bargain is splendid — it is like driving the wedge bodily in.

According to the courteous usage of a time when avowed Liberals were so few that they deemed themselves all friends, Horace Gerold received a congratulatory call from most of the men of mark in Paris. Nineteen-twentieths of the members of the bar, pretty nearly every one of the students in the School of Law, and some three or four score opposition journalists, left their cards upon him.\* It was a singular procession, which lasted three days, to the mingled consternation and pride of M. Pochemolle — consternation, because the honest draper could not but wince at the sight of so much factiousness incarnate walking up his staircases ; pride, because the good man worshipped success, and felt all the importance of possessing a lodger who was getting on so famously.

After the cards came the anonymous letters and the albums ; the former mostly eulogistic and feminine (there must be women who have an uncommon amount of time to lose), the latter feminine also, and accompanied by notes praying M. Horace Gerold kindly to write a few verses, a sentiment, or any thing in the world, provided only he signed his name to it. After this arrived the artist of a comic paper, who requested leave to portray Horace with a head three times bigger than his body. This was the *ne plus ultra*. When a gentleman asks permission to draw you with a big head you have reached the acme of celebrity. Fame can do nothing more for you.

We must not forget the bank-note of 500 francs, which Horace Gerold received as his *honorarium*. There had been no previous agreement as to fee, no allusion even to the subject ; but on the day following the trial Nestor Roche sent his counsel a simple and affectionate letter, in which he said, "The usual way, my dear Horace, is for the solicitors to settle these affairs ; but

\* As an historical illustration of this graceful custom, it may be mentioned that, in 1867, after his very remarkable speech in the Senate in defence of free thought, the late Monsieur Sainte Beuve received no less than 12,300 cards. Liberalism was gathering strength then.

there had better be no formalism between you and me. I am just off to pay nine and thirty thousand francs into court—twelve thousand for fines, five-and-twenty thousand for damages, and two thousand for costs. I would pay the whole cheerfully enough, if I might forward it to you along with enclosed; but I confess it rather goes against my heart to enrich the citizen Macrobe. However, I am not angling for sympathy; your speech has done a fine stroke of work for the 'Sentinelle': we sold twenty thousand copies more than usual this morning."

All this was the bright side of the picture, but there was also a dark side, or at least a side rather less agreeable. Horace was sitting in his study some two or three mornings after his triumph, when he was startled by a knock much more rapid and less ceremonious than visitors are accustomed to give. He was alone, Emile being absent at the law courts, and he had just finished a letter to his father, which was lying unfolded before him. On going to open the door it caused him some surprise to find Mdlle. Georgette.

"O M. Horace!" she said blushing terribly, "I've run up to tell you that I think the police are coming to search your rooms."

"The police?" and Horace showed Mdlle. Georgette into his study, shutting the door behind her.

"Yes, yes," she continued, hurriedly; "ever since you made your speech there have been two such curious men loafing on the pavement outside the house: great ugly men with big sticks. I believe they took down the names of most of the gentlemen who have called on you these last few days; and yesterday evening when you were out, you and M. Emile, they came in with M. Louchard, the commissary of police, and wanted to search your rooms; but papa wouldn't let them."

"What could they want to search our rooms for?"

"I don't know, M. Horace," answered Mdlle. Georgette, contemplating him half-naïvely, half in terror. "M. Louchard said you and M. Emile were dangers to the Government, and that he'd got his orders about you from the prefect; and when papa refused to let him have the key of your rooms during your absence, he said he'd come back to-day when you were at home, and made papa promise not to say about his having been here; but I didn't promise: for M. Louchard didn't know I heard him."

"It's very good of you to give me this warning, Mdlle. Georgette," said Horace, with a look of gratitude; "but," added he, throwing a glance round the room, "I

don't think the police can find any thing dangerous here."

"Have you no letters from friends, no books against the government," asked Mdlle. Georgette, with ready woman's wit.

Horace hesitated a moment, and then struck his forehead: "Dear me, what am I thinking of?" he cried; "thanks a hundred times for reminding me;" and he went to a book-shelf half filled with volumes of that uncomplimentary kind which the presses of Belgium used to send forth, and send forth still, in such numbers against the Emperor of the French. There were Belgian papers, too, brought by the brothers when they came into France—papers interdicted by the police, and the importation of which was punishable with fines and imprisonment. Horace spread a towel on the floor, laid all this anti-dynastic literature upon it, emptied a drawer-full of his father's letters on to the heap, and tied up the whole into a bundle. But when he had done this:—"And now, where am I to put it all," he said, rather helplessly?—"We've no hiding-place that will be safe from M. Louchard."

"Give the bundle to me," replied Georgette looking at him. "I'll hide it in my room; they won't come and search there."

Horace fixed his eyes on the spirited girl, and said with a little wonder, "What have I done, Mdlle. Georgette, that you should act in so kindly a way towards me."

"Why shouldn't I save you from getting into trouble if I can?" answered Georgette, in a would-be indifferent voice, with perhaps just the faintest tremor in it. She took up the bundle; and, without looking at him, added, "I must go now, M. Horace; good-by." And in another minute she was gone.

Horace Gerold did not at once move; he remained standing a few moments where he was, gazing at the spot on which Georgette had stood. Then he returned to his seat and slowly folded the letter he had been writing.

This simple operation must have taken him a long while, for he was still engaged in it when a sharp rap at the outer door gave him to infer that the promised M. Louchard had arrived.

True enough. This time it was not a pair of bright hazel eyes, and a pink, bashful face that met him; but three individuals buttoned up to the throat. The commissary and his two satellites, MM. Fouineux and Tournetrique, of the secret police.

One must have lived in countries where the police is the despised, ever-ready tool of a hated government, to realize the in-

effable look of disdain with which Horace Gerold received his visitors.

"I am a commissary of police" — began M. Louchard.

"That information is superfluous; your profession is written on your face," answered Horace, curtly. "I suppose you have come to ransack my rooms. Here are my keys; get your job done as soon as possible."

Even MM. Fouineux and Tournetrique, who were accustomed enough to be spat upon, looked a little sheepish at this greeting. Horace had not given the keys into M. Louchard's hands, but thrown them on the floor for him to pick up. The commissary, who was a man of education, red-dened.

The three followed Horace into his study. They kept their hats on, seeing which, the young man said, peremptorily, "Take your hats off in my room." It was not the custom of the three honest gentlemen to uncover themselves when paying domiciliary visits; but the expression of Horace Gerold's features was not pleasant in moments of anger. The police hate fighting about trifles. They took their hats off.

Without thinking of what he was doing, Horace went to his desk to resume the operation of closing and sealing his letter, in which he had been twice interrupted. In a trice, M. Louchard was down upon him with a swoop, made a grab at the letter, and snatched it out of his hand. "I beg pardon; that's a letter," he said. "I must have all letters."

"Ah, to be sure," rejoined Horace, unconcernedly; and, throwing himself into an arm-chair, he took up a newspaper, which he read without paying any more attention to his guests.

It is the admirable privilege of all Frenchmen to be liable at any moment to a search visit, and to see all their papers fingered and confiscated. They have no right of appeal; no right, even, to know why their property is being violated. And the search is no mere formality. Messrs. Louchard, Fouineux, and Tournetrique remained above an hour ferreting in Horace Gerold's bedroom and study. They turned up the corners of the carpets, routed out the drawers and cupboards, probed the mattresses, pillows, and curtains, and made a parcel, not only of such letters as they could find, but of every scrap of paper, however small, that bore a line of handwriting, tradesmen's bills not excepted. The object of a search is to obtain all the details possible as to the searchee's habits and acquaintances, and a tradesman's bill may be as instructive a document for this purpose as any other. There was a sheet

of blotting-paper on which Horace had scribbled a list of a few friends who had sent him civil letters which needed answering. Messrs. Louchard and Co. took that. There was a japanned bowl which served as receptacle for the thousand and odd visiting cards which Horace had received after his speech. The young barrister was, not unnaturally, proud of these friendly trophies, and had contemplated keeping them as mementoes. Monsieur Tournetrique shovelled them all into his pocket-handkerchief, tied the handkerchief into a knot, and dropped it into the tail pocket of his coat.

Horace did not stir. Only, at the end of an hour, when the three representatives of justice and imperialism had inspected his own rooms, they were for going into Emile's. In order to do this they were obliged to pass Horace, whose chair was so situated that it blocked the door of communication between the two sets of apartments. On the first man presenting himself, Horace stood up and said, "Where are you going?"

"To search those other rooms," answered M. Louchard.

"Those rooms are my brother's," rejoined Horace quietly.

"Monsieur, we have orders to search your brother's rooms as well as yours."

"If my brother chooses to let you search his rooms I have nothing to say," was Horace's impassive reply; "but in his absence I am the defender of his property. No one goes in there whilst I am here."

"Do you mean to say you intend resisting by force?" asked M. Louchard, taken aback.

Horace caught up the fire-tongs that were lying close within his reach.

"Yes," he said calmly.

To do M. Louchard and consorts justice, it was not the fear of a broken head that made them pause. If Horace Gerold had been an ordinary rebel — a mere journalist for instance — the three would have fallen upon him together, knocked him down, handcuffed him, and bundled him off to the station in a cab to be charged with threatening to do grievous bodily harm to government functionaries. But a barrister is an awkward adversary. The barristers form a powerful corporation, and if one of them were knocked down, the Council of the Order, with the "Bâtonnier" at its head, would certainly insist upon reparation. M. Louchard was quite perspicuous enough to guess that this reparation would probably consist in his own dismissal. He thought it prudent to temporize.

"Monsieur, I am only doing my duty," he observed.

"And I mine," rejoined Horace. "But



it is no use wasting further words. You have two courses open to you, either to wait until my brother returns, or to go and find him at the Palace of Justice and tell him that you want his help to turn his rooms upside down."

Monsieur Louchard did not smile at this joke, but he accepted the former of the two alternatives, after venturing upon one or two more remonstrances to which Horace did not even deign to give a reply. When Emile returned about a couple of hours afterwards, he found his brother composedly smoking a cigarette, with a pair of fire-tongs in his hand, and the three myrmidons of the law seated in a row opposite, looking at him.

On being told what was the matter, Emile threw down his keys as disdainfully as Horace had done. MM. Louchard, Fouineux, and Tournetrique thereupon resumed their search, repeating their conscientious investigation of beds, cupboards, and carpets, and making an abundant harvest of paper scraps as before. In Emile's rooms, however, occurred an episode which Horace had not foreseen; for, in exploring the top drawer on the left-hand side of the bureau, the detective Fouineux lighted upon the tin box which contained the title-deed of the Clairefontaine estates. Emile interposed, observing it was only a family document; but this was reason the more why M. Louchard should keep firm hold of it. Delighted to have got possession of something that looked valuable, the commissary took the box from his subaltern and expressed his determination not to part with it on any account.

"But what can you do with it?" cried Horace, more amused than angry; "I tell you it's only a title-deed."

At the word title-deed M. Louchard redoubled his grip of the box, and resolved in his own deep mind that he had captured a prize. He set himself in the immediate vicinity of the door, ready to bolt if any attempt at snatching should be made; and in a quick voice directed his satellites to make haste and get done. This injunction had the effect of abridging the search by about half-an-hour. Less than ten minutes after the discovery of the box, the brothers were left alone, MM. Louchard, Fouineux, and Tournetrique having returned to the prefecture; where, amongst other things, they were mindful to state that Maitre Horace Gerold was "a dangerous man of murderous propensity," an observation that was scrupulously recorded in that famous and mysterious ledger, in which are inscribed the names of all those who, at any time, and for any reason, have been brought under the notice of the French police.

This domiciliary visit was destined to have ulterior consequences that influenced in no slight degree the careers of the Gerolds; but the only immediate effect of it was to make the two brothers laugh, and to raise Horace a cubit higher on his newly erected pedestal. The explorations of M. Louchard furnished a capital paragraph for "La Sentinelle;" the Liberals of the Boulevard waxed indignant; and the general opinion of the public was that this young barrister must be a very remarkable man, since the Government evinced such spite towards him. So true is it that despotism sets a halo upon those whom it tries to persecute.

Emile profited by his brother's triumphs. At the very moment when MM. Louchard, Fouineux, and Tournetrique were making hay amongst Horace's papers, the younger brother was being retained in three or four press-trials, at the Palace of Justice. These briefs would have fallen to Horace had he not been disbarred; but the journalists who retained Emile thought that he would no doubt follow in his brother's footsteps and make a sensation speech, perhaps even more violent than the other. In this, however, they were disappointed. When the first of the trials came on the court was crammed to bursting, and the defendants, whose paper had not been selling very well of late, were building up soothing hopes on a rattling sentence of fine and imprisonment, which should quadruple their circulation and give them the *locus standi* of martyrs. But Emile's speech was so simple that it took everybody by surprise. There were no flights of oratory in it, no attempts at declamation, no allusions to the *coup-d'état*. It was a plain, lucid piece of argumentation, full of truth, admirably compact, and couched in language as unpretending as it was respectful. The judges did not acquit the prisoners—that, of course, was out of the question—but they were so much relieved that they only inflicted a month's imprisonment, without any fine at all; a result which transported the solicitors present, who at once marked down Emile Gerold for brief in the civil courts; but which not a little chagrined the journalists, who confided one to another their chagrined impression that Emile had not the same brilliant talent as his brother.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HORACE STARTS IN JOURNALISM.

It would be fair to suppose that after the pretty rough handling he had got from

Nestor Roche's counsel, M. Macrobe would have renounced all further acquaintance with the Gerolds. But M. Macrobe's was a soul devoid of vindictiveness. Perfectly conversant with the fact that Horace Gerold was heir to a dukedom, and that he would some day inherit at least 500,000 francs a year, the financier had allowed himself to indulge in certain private schemes with regard to the young man, and he was not to be balked of them for a few ugly words, more or less. It was a maxim with M. Macrobe that where there's a will there's a way, and his will was to become Horace Gerold's friend. How he was to profit by the friendship when he had obtained it, and in what particular direction he was to work his schemes, were points upon which he had not altogether made up his mind, having never yet had the opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with either of the brothers. But, like a skilful angler who knows of a fish in a certain pond, which he will proceed to hook when he has the time, so M. Macrobe bore Horace Gerold in his mind, resolving that he would "land" him some day, and determined meanwhile to lose no opportunity of throwing out clever baits. Within a week of the trial the two MM. Gerold received a card from Madame Roderheim, wife of the partner in the firm Lecoq, Roderheim and Macrobe, inviting them to a *thé dansant*.

Now, if this card had come by post, or been deposited with the concierge by one of Madame Roderheim's plumed footmen, Horace and Emile, out of deference to their father's request that they should keep on amicable terms with MM. L. and R., would, on the appointed evening, have put themselves into dress clothes and have gone through the civility, which consists in driving two miles to bow to a lady in a low-bodied dress, drink a cup of weak tea, and then drive home again. But, unfortunately, it was M. Isidore Macrobe who left the card (indeed, it was he who had especially asked it of Madame Roderheim), and this circumstance was not long in becoming known to Horace, to whom the missive was delivered by Mademoiselle Georgette, despatched by her father on this embassy.

Mademoiselle Georgette was very glad to be the bearer of the note. It was on the day following the visit of the commissary, and she was anxious to return the young barrister his parcel of contraband books and papers, which had lain hidden in one of her bonnet-boxes a day and a night. Perhaps she would not have been sorry even had she had no books to give back, but this thought was one that lurked too deep for human eyes, and one which she would have rejected with the utmost

spirit, had any silent voice within ventured to whisper it to her.

With a slight flutter at the heart, due possibly to the number of steps she had been climbing, and to the fear lest anybody should see her on the staircase with the suspicious bundle, Mademoiselle Georgette knocked as she had done the preceding day. It being about four, Horace was alone as before, but he was just preparing to go out. The young man would have found it difficult to explain why he colored at the sight of the draper's daughter; but color he did, and so did Mademoiselle Georgette.

"Here are your books, M. Horace, and a letter," she said.

She was going to retire after this, but Horace stopped her, saying, thankfully, "Do you know, Mademoiselle Georgette, I have been reflecting all night that you have rendered me a great service. If those books had been found here they might very well have furnished a pretext for indicting me as a Revolutionist. You have probably saved me from imprisonment."

She took no pains to hide the gleam of pleasure in her eyes, but answered with candor: "You thanked me yesterday. I am glad I have been of use to you. But" (and here she looked up at him a little timidly) "why do you expose yourself to being imprisoned?"

"Oh, prison is not very dreadful!" he answered smiling.

"Then the service I have rendered you is not so very great," rejoined she, biting her red lips and smiling in her turn.

"I mean," laughed Horace, embarrassed — "I mean that prison in our case doesn't mean iron chains and a straw bed. I was just going to see some prisoners when you came in; I daresay I shall find them comfortably enough lodged; but loss of liberty is always a hardship, Mademoiselle Georgette."

"I suppose you are going to see those gentlemen whom you defended," remarked Georgette, feeling some little curiosity on a subject so profoundly novel to her as the captivity of gentlemen connected with the Press. Mademoiselle Georgette was an occasional reader of the Official "Moniteur," the only daily journal which M. Pochemolle deemed it consistent with his opinions to take in.

Horace nodded.

"I am going to Sainte Pélagie to see M. Roche and M. Delormay, who were to surrender to-day. Shall I tell them that you sympathize with their misfortune?"

"You may tell them so if you like," answered Mademoiselle Georgette, gravely, "though I think you would do better to tell

them not to write any more against M. Macrobe. Why is it that all you gentlemen are so much against M. Macrobe?" she continued, yielding to the temptation of conversing for once with a person whose whole soul was not enwrapped in cloth and calico. "I thought he was a friend of yours, M. Horace."

"Not of mine, Mademoiselle Georgette; I know very little about him, and that little is not to his advantage."

"He has a very lovely daughter," observed Mademoiselle Georgette, gazing rather steadfastly at her interlocutor.

"So he has," replied Horace, recalling the fair hair and seraph-like expression of Mademoiselle Angélique; "but the daughter doesn't change the father. He would be a bold man who married Mademoiselle Angélique and accepted any dowry with her."

These words did not seem to displease Georgette, but she replied generously: "Are you quite sure, M. Horace, as to all they say about M. Macrobe? Papa thinks so highly of him, for he is always very good to us. Though he lives right at the other end of the town now, he comes to us whenever he wants to buy any thing. He was here to-day and offered papa some shares in that new *Société du Crédit Parisien* which is making so much noise."

"Oh! M. Macrobe was here to-day, was he?" exclaimed Horace, interested.

"Why, yes; that letter comes from him; at least it was he who brought it."

Horace opened the letter with evident curiosity; but when he had inspected the contents he was amused, and said, "It appears to be your vocation to do me good turns, Mademoiselle Georgette; yesterday you saved me from prison, to-day you have kept me out of a trap."

"What trap?" asked Georgette innocently.

Horace was on the point of holding out his hand to Mademoiselle Georgette, but he checked himself and answered gently: "It would take too long to explain, and I don't think it would much interest you."

Georgette looked surprised, but she was beginning to reflect, that she had been talking long enough. She did not, however, return to the shop down stairs for another five minutes, and when she entered, her brother, M. Alcibiade Pochemolle (occupied in catching flies pending the receipt of custom), was the first to notice that she was a little pale, and held a parcel in her hands; which she at once went and showed her mother. This is how Mademoiselle Georgette came by the parcel.

Just as she was about to bring her interview with Horace Gerold to an end, the

latter had opened a drawer and taken out of some silver paper a handsome work-box which he had bought the evening before. It was one of those admirable and expensive knickknacks such as are only to be found in Paris — a thing of rosewood with silver-gilt corners and fittings, ivory silk-reels, satin lining, and golden thimble. To tell the truth, the better part of Nester Roche's 500-franc note had been bestowed on the purchase.

"I want you to accept this box, Mademoiselle Georgette, as a souvenir," said Horace, before the young girl had even divined his intention.

Georgette was so unprepared for the present, that she turned first red, then white, and echoed in a pained tone: "*A souvenir? Are you going away then?*"

"No, I am not going away; but a hundred things may happen, and I should like you to accept this keepsake whilst the recollection of your thoughtful kindness of yesterday is still fresh with us both. Don't refuse," added he, seeing that Georgette looked hurt by his offer; "I shall tell Madame Pochemolle it is a gift in return for the number of letters you have had the trouble of bringing me, and if you refuse I will offer you the box in her presence." He said this gayly; but it was in a more serious tone he repeated, "Accept it in the same spirit as it is offered, Mademoiselle Georgette; if you refuse I shall think you consider me guilty of impertinence."

"You would be wrong to think that," she murmured quietly; yet she still looked pained, and it was only after Horace had taken the box and gently forced it into her hands that, not to wound him, she consented to keep it. There was an incident that helped to silence her objections. It has been said that Horace's parcel of books had been hidden by Mademoiselle Georgette in a bonnet-box. There were a few artificial flowers lying in this box, and one of them — a moss-rose-bud — had clung by its wire-stem to the folds of the towel in which the books were wrapped and been brought up, unnoticed by Georgette. Horace saw the rose, and, when he had placed the work-box in Georgette's hands, unfastened it and said, "May I, too, have my souvenir, Mademoiselle Georgette; will you let me keep this flower?" At this, the look of pain vanished altogether from the young girl's face. She threw him a rapid look, loaded with gratitude and happiness, and fled. But her emotion had not yet disappeared when she returned down stairs and — as already chronicled — encountered the gaze of M. Alcibiade Pochemolle.

M. Pochemolle senior was delighted with the gift. There are drapers who might

prick up their ears at hearing that their daughter had been presented with a costly work-box by a gentleman on the third floor; but M. Pochemolle was of the old school; he believed in social distinctions: and just as he would have deemed it presumption to think of marrying his daughter to any one above her sphere, so he had a sort of honest and chivalrous confidence that no man in Monsieur Gerold's position would ever trifle with the affections of his child. Madame Pochemolle, though not quite so humble in her matrimonial views respecting Mademoiselle Georgette, was also pleased with the present; she might have looked grave at a brooch or a locket, but a work-box was such a brotherly offering, that it proved the purest motives on the part of the young barrister. As for M. Alcibiade, he was all enthusiasm, wondered what was the price of the box, and would have been greatly astonished had he heard that his sister had ever refused such a gift. M. Alcibiade was of the new school of tradesmen.

"Georgette, my child," said M. Pochemolle, "we must make M. Horace some return for this. It is a pity that young gentleman is a Republican; but he has the courtesy and gallantry of a count. Let me see: what can we do for him? Ha, I have it: Alcibiade, measure your sister four yards of the finest lawn, Cambrai mark, and she shall inaugurate her box by hemming M. Horace a dozen pair of bands to wear in court. Meantime, give me my hat and gloves; I must go and offer my dutiful thanks to our lodger."

And the thanks of M. Pochemolle were all that could be desired. He met Horace Gerold on the staircase, and made him a bow such as would not have disgraced that famous lace-purveyor of the Prince of Condé, who was said to bow better than the Prince himself. And the same hour Mademoiselle Georgette set to work upon the cambric bands, cutting and stitching with a diligence that somewhat surprised M. Alcibiade, who remembered that his sister never worked so fast when she had to hem any of his pocket-handkerchiefs.

Now, are we to conclude from this gift of a work-box that Horace Gerold, the heir of the Hautbourgs, or, what is more to the purpose, the rising pleader already renowned in Paris for his good looks, his good luck, and his eloquence, entertained any deeper feeling towards the draper's daughter than the parents of that young lady suspected? Maidens of Mademoiselle Georgette's age are apt to imagine that every soft word, playful smile, and kind glance are so many indications of attachment, and poor Georgette, as she hemmed the cambric bands, doubtless built many a fancy man-

sion that would have crumbled into dust could she have witnessed the extremely leisurely gait and placid air of M. Horace as he went on his way to visit his friends at Sté. Pélagie. Lovers do not wear the expression that Horace Gerold wore. He trod the pavement like a man who is exempt from cares of every sort; whose blood flows cheerily in his veins, and who would not change his present lot for a kingdom. Well-a-day, how far he was from thinking of Clairefontaine now, and what a good joke he would have considered it, had any long-headed soothsayer lifted the veil of the future and shown him—but why anticipate? let us follow the young man on his visit to the prison.

Sainte Pélagie is a fine gray building, devoted, like the Sixth Chamber of Correctional Police, half-and-half to the accommodation of thieves and of journalists; the thieves occupy the back part; the journalists the front. Let us be just, however, towards the Imperial Government. When a journalist was sentenced in the courts of the Empire, he was not laid hold of there and then in the dock, and carted off to bondage in a van, as is done in certain freer countries. He was left to surrender pretty much when he pleased (save in very exceptional cases). He might take a fortnight, or a month; sometimes he took three months; and when he at last made up his mind to go and be locked up, he drove to his destination in a cab, bearing his boxes, portmanteaus, and writing materials with him, and leaving word with his friends to come and call upon him, just as if he was off for a hydropathic establishment, and was merely about to undergo a few months' cure.

Of course the Government was not bound to make things thus pleasant, and occasionally, when sulkily disposed, it would order that such and such a captive journalist be rendered as miserable as possible by being debarred from all intercourse with the outer world. But such instances of waspishness were not common. It was always borne in mind that the imprisoned writer of to-day may be the cabinet minister of to-morrow; journalism being a career that leads to any thing—provided you abandon it.

Horace Gerold's purpose in visiting Sainte Pélagie was two-fold; in the first place he had a duty of common courtesy to perform, and in the next, being thrown out of work by his six months' interdiction, he wished to ask for employment on the staff of the "Sentinelle." He found Nestor Roche installed in a room that looked much more like an apartment in a middle-class boarding-house than a cell in a prison. It was tolerably large, the walls were pa-

pered, there was a carpet on the floor, and two workmen were engaged in nailing up a bookcase, which Roche had obtained permission to bring with him, as well as a bureau, a couple of easy-chairs, an enormous ottoman, and a shower-bath. On a peg above a small camp bedstead hung the monumental hat of the captive, which at once arrested the eye like the helmet of a cloistered knight; and the captive himself was seated at a table smoking a meerschau pipe and correcting a proof, whilst a printer's devil, his legs tucked up on the bar of a chair, was waiting to carry the said proof to the printing-office.

"*Salve, puer,*" exclaimed Roche, holding out his hand, "I shall have done in a minute. Meanwhile, you'll find Delormay at home; he's next door."

M. Max Delormay had not arrived above an hour and was standing in his shirt-sleeves amidst a litter of portmanteaus and carpet-bags, from which he was extracting bottles of eau-de-cologne, hair-brushes, pots of pomatum, razor-strops, and the adjuncts of a well-furnished toilet-table. M. Max felt deeply grateful to Horace Gerold for having secured him six months' imprisonment. Ever since his sentence, the value of his signature as a writer had risen considerably in the literary market. A whole collection of articles, tales, and sketches, of which he had been utterly unable to dispose in the days of his freedom, had passed triumphantly into the columns of various broad-sheets the moment he had become a martyr. Moreover, he had obtained promotion on the staff of the "*Sentinelle*," having been raised from the note and paragraph department to that of leader-writing. Encouraged by these results, M. Max felt equal to facing any amount of persecution for the truth's sake. He shook Horace warmly by the hand, planted him in a chair, and offered him a cigar.

"You'll stay and dine with us, I hope? We make up a capital mess: Roche and I, two writers of the '*Siecle*,' Jules Tartine of the '*Gazette des Boulevards*,' and three members of a secret society who are in here for two months more; the famous Albi's one of them. We're to mess in Roche's room, dinner from the restaurant over the way, one franc fifty centimes a head. Here, you, my friend, just cut down stairs to the canteen and get us a pint of cognac, two lemons, some sugar, and a jug of hot water; catch hold of the money."

This order was addressed to what appeared a workman, who was putting M. Max's clothes in a chest of drawers. Like the two workmen in Nestor Roche's room, he was attired in gray garments, and wore his hair cropped close to his head.

"Most intelligent man," remarked Max Delormay, when his attendant had vanished. "The Government, you know, gives us some of our fellow-prisoners from the other part of the building to wait upon us. We have one between three. They are chosen for their good behavior. I dare say you saw those in Roche's room. One's in, I believe, for spoiling the good looks of a policeman; the other for putting stones through the window of a publican who refused him credit. This one of mine used to make mistakes in computing the change to which his fares were entitled, and then molest them when they objected. He was a cab-driver, and means to reform when he gets out."

The cabman who made mistakes returned with the cognac, lemons, &c., and declared himself competent to brew, "*un grog*," if need were. Soon after, the voice of Nestor Roche was heard shouting, "I've finished now," and M. Max accompanied Horace into the other room, each bearing their share of the refreshments. The printer's devil, a boy with one eye (but what a perspicuous one was that single orbit!), had slid off his chair, and was receiving directions not to loiter with the proof by the wayside. He snivelled as he listened, and, I regret to state, more than once made use of his sleeve in guise of pocket-handkerchief.

"Have you any copy, M'sieu Delormay?" inquired he, upon the entrance of this gentleman.

M. Max had no copy; but he laid a hand on the shaggy poll of the small Cyclops, and bade him tell his name to Horace Gerold.

The boy fixed his one eye on Horace, and answered sturdily, "My name's Tripou, but they calls me Trigger."

"And now tell M. Gerold why they call you Trigger."

"They calls me Trigger," answered the young Tripou with pride, "because in '51, when there was the fighting, and I was seven years old, I prigg'd the gun of a sentry at the Louvre, when he wasn't looking, and shot him through the head with it."

"Good lad!" exclaimed M. Max, dismissing him. "You'll grow up to be a valuable citizen,"—an assurance which encouraged Trigger to add, for the enlightenment of the stranger, "The gun kicked, and that's how I lost my eye."

The presence of two gentlemen in gray proving an impediment to confidential intercourse, nothing was done but grog-sipping and cloud-blowing for a quarter of an hour or so; but when the bookcase had been nailed up, the shower-bath established in its corner, and the ottoman wheeled near the fireplace, the gentlemen in gray van-

ished, and then Horace plunged at once in *medias res* by saying, "I've come to ask you to take me on your staff, M. Roche."

"H'm," grunted the editor from out of a curling wreath of shag-smoke. "Does our condition seem so delightful as to tempt you to become one of us?"

"If you think me good enough," was Horace's modest reply.

"You'd be good enough in any case," answered the editor shaking the ashes off his pipe. "You've made yourself a name, and the public'll read any thing you write. Only, I'll tell you what, journalism's not the easy thing you may think."

Max Delormay confirmed this statement by ejaculating with feeling that he had often sat up a whole night elaborating notes which wouldn't be coaxed out of his head,—a reminiscence which evidently gave him a very sublime estimate of the difficulties of literature.

"Yes, but I didn't mean that," rejoined Nestor Roche mildly. "What I mean is, that there are two kinds of journalism,—one for which any man who can spell is fit enough; and the other, the real journalism, which sucks in its man like a whirlpool. Those among us who take a liking to our craft don't leave it. Our pens stick to our fingers, and there we sit scribbling until brain-fever grabs us, which it generally does, in the long run. I don't want to deter you from following your own bent; but I warn you of this, that, if you once take to printer's-ink, you'll soon be throwing off your gown. It's easier to write articles than to read up briefs and make speeches. It's pleasanter work, too; but, after a time, it squeezes your brain as flat as a sucked orange. Yes, I know what you were going to say," proceeded the editor, observing that Horace was preparing to reply. "You were going to cite half a dozen journalists who have been at work close upon fifty years, and who write leaders as much as ever. Yes, but just read those leaders. They are washed-out copies of others written long before you were born. The authors of them take it easy. They have given up fabricating new thoughts; they say the same things over and over again; they are like those looms that throw off, mechanically, a piece of cotton of the same length, breadth, color, and texture, every day. And mind, it needs a certain merit, in its way, to be able to do that. It requires a good thick, solid head that goes 'thud,' when you rap it, and doesn't contain two straws' worth of enthusiasm or conviction. Those men have no passion for their work. Their blood flows coolly and evenly through their veins, like the waters of the St. Martin's Canal.

Journalism, with them, is not a calling, it is a trade. They take to it in the same spirit as they would have taken to boot-making, had they been born a few steps lower down the ladder. But you, Horace Gerold, will never make one of this band. If I am any judge of your character, you will throw yourself into your work with all your might,—ambition, vanity, conviction, and talent, all pushing you together; and, so sure as ever you throw yourself into journalism, it will use you up, unless indeed," added the editor, rather gloomily, "unless it leads you to a prefecture or a seat in the cabinet; but I don't see much chance of that; for you are not of the stuff of which nature makes renegades, and I am not very sanguine as to our having a republic whilst you and I are on earth to enjoy it."

"Why not?" asked Max Delormay, astonished at this dispiriting prediction.

"Because we are a nation of parrots, Max," rejoined Nestor Roche, laying down his pipe.

It was not often that the editor indulged in such long speeches. He was habitually curt in his dialogues, and seldom went the length of developing his views. But his esteem for his old friend, Manuel Gerold, was so great, that he treated Horace and Emile to a share of it, and spoke more at length with them than he did with anybody, save his wife and his niece, who kept his house for him.

Horace answered, without much hesitation, "I never thought of taking to journalism as a profession. All I want is employment to keep me from rusting until I can go into court again."

"Dangerous," muttered the editor. "I took to journalism five and thirty years ago, waiting until I could pick up a practice as a doctor, and I have been at it ever since. But you shall have your way. The 'Sentinelle' is open to you. Write me leaders, or articles, or any thing else you like; only, in six months from this, I shall remind you of what you've just said, and expect you to drop the pen; for you can't drive two trades together."

A few minutes later Nestor Roche drew a pencil from his pocket, and said "Listen: this is just the position of the 'Sentinelle' at the present moment: We are selling 40,000 a day ever since the trial; at three sous a copy, that makes 5,600 francs a day; deduct 6 centimes per copy for the stamp-duty, and there remains 3,200 francs. Expenses of printing are 1,300 francs; publishing and remittances to agents, 800 francs; carriage, 400 francs. This leaves us 700 francs, to which we may add another 800 from advertisements. Out of this

1,500 you must subtract again 750 as payments to the staff, and the remaining 750 may be said to constitute the profits, which are supposed to be divided equally between my partner and me. To my partner, however, who is a money man, I pay over and above his share in the profits the sum of 5,000 francs a year, being the interest on the 50,000 francs he was obliged to deposit in the Treasury as caution-money when we started the paper; moreover, it is I who must meet such liabilities as may spring up in the way of fines and damages; for instance, the nine-and-thirty thousand francs of the other day. This statement will show you that the 'Sentinelle' is at present a paying concern; but you must remember, on the other hand, that the normal circulation is not 40,000, but 20,000, and that, as the 'Sentinelle' has already received two 'admonitions' from Government, it may, on its next offence, be suspended for two months, and after that be suppressed altogether, in which last event I am bound by treaty to pay my partner 100,000 francs. Do you follow?"

"Yes," answered Horace, a little surprised.

"Well, then," said the editor, shutting up his pencil-case and relapsing into briefness, "you won't make any mistake as to my reasons if I sometimes cut down your articles until there's nothing left of them but the paring. Supposing the 'Sentinelle' were suppressed I should be as good as ruined; but, what is infinitely more serious, there would be a Liberal organ the less in Paris: for, as you are aware, it needs a special license from Government to start a new paper, and that license the Government would refuse."

"Cut down my articles as much as you please," answered Horace, smiling. "You may be sure I shall respect your reasons."

Upon this understanding the young barrister temporarily joined the staff of the "Sentinelle," and wrote his first leader the same evening.

## CHAPTER X.

### NEW FRIENDS, NEW HABITS.

A BARRISTER may go into society or not as he pleases, and perhaps the less he goes the better for his professional work; but with a political journalist the case is just the opposite. Before long, Horace Gerold found himself thrown into daily intercourse with a number of personages

whom, hitherto, he had only considered from afar; eminent Liberals for the most part, and leaders of the party, whose organ the "Sentinelle" was. These gentlemen represented a considerable variety of shades in opinion, and, under a freer form of government, would have been pretty certain to detest one another cordially. But one of the beauties of despotism is that, like fox-hunting, "it brings parties together as wouldn't otherwise meet," and Legitimists, Orleanists, and Republicans formed in those days one happy family, coalesced in common hatred of the reigning dynasty.

As, owing to the law which prohibited the founding of political newspapers without special license from Government, the number of opposition prints was extremely limited, some honor attached to being on the staff of an independent journal. It was something like belonging to a crack club. All the members of the independent press hung very much together, maintaining a sort of freemasonry, and holding carefully aloof from the writers of the semi-official or Government press, whom they despised as little better than hired menials. Naturally, the Bonapartist writers resented this contempt, and affected to reciprocate it, and this kept up a feud which evinced itself in little things, such as frequenting different cafés, walking on opposite sides of the Boulevards, and adopting dissimilar slangs. In 1855, the favorite café of the opposition press was the Café des Variétés, that of Government journalists the Café des Princes on the other side of the way. It should be added that the face-to-face situation of these rival establishments not unfrequently led to unpleasantnesses, such as meetings in the middle of the road between foes crossing from one pavement to the other; and so sure as ever this happened, there was either a treading on toes, or a jostling of elbows, or something to necessitate an exchange of cards, perhaps an exchange of slaps on the face, and on the morrow an encounter at daybreak. Those were times when MM. Grisier and Pons, the fencing-masters, had a rare number of pupils in the literary profession. Horace was cordially received at the Café des Variétés the first time he appeared there at the "hour of absinthe," i.e., 5 p.m., on the arm of a M. Hector Tampon, sub-editor of the "Sentinelle." Preceded by his quickly-won reputation, he was hailed as a valuable recruit. Nobody asked whether he wrote well—that, in the opinion of journalists, was a secondary consideration—but he thought well: he seemed to hate the Government well, and that was enough.

M. de Tirécruhon, the stout editor of the "Gazette des Boulevards" whom he had

already seen once in the Correctional Court on the occasion of the Macrobe trial, held out his hand and shouted with a bluntness which at first surprised him: "Welcome, M. Gerold. You're quite right to try the press. I predict you'll make your way in it."

"Oh! I'm only a visitor," answered Horace modestly: "the 'Sentinelle' has taken me in like a passenger on a cruise."

"Tut, tut! When passengers like you come on board they don't go off again in a hurry. It's ten times pleasanter writing leading articles than cramming briefs, and so you'll find when you've had time to compare. If you leave the 'Sentinelle' give me the preference; my columns are open to you." M. de Tirecruchon here drew an immense flat cigar from a Russian-leather case, and wreathed his solid face in smoke. "I'm a Legitimist," he continued, "but it doesn't matter, for it's Liberty Hall in my paper; all my contributors are free to write as they please. Do you see that small man yonder, sucking iced-punch through a straw? he's my sub-editor, a Red Republican like yourself, opposed to luxuries, and all that sort of thing. Take a seat. I'm going to prison next week, at least, as soon as Number 9 at Ste. Pélagie is vacant. I was sentenced yesterday, but I like being always in my old quarters, so that when I heard Number 9 was tenanted — (I look upon Number 9 as almost mine, for I've been there five times, and always leave a carpet-bag and a few shirts there), — I asked the Public Prosecutor not to make out the commitment until it was vacant again. Very civil fellow, the Public Prosecutor. He'll do any thing for you if you treat him properly; I called on him in dress clothes and a white tie, and that touched him. I see you smoke cigarettes; they're too weak for me; try one of these *panatellas*. I suppose you've made it up by this time with Macrobe. Uncommonly clever fellow, and gives capital dinners at that new place of his in the Champs Elysées. His daughter's one of the prettiest girls I've ever seen. You let fly pretty hard at the *Crédit Parisien* the other day, but it's a splendid concern upon my word; and if you've any spare cash I advise you to invest in it. I've done so. Nominal value of shares 500 francs, issued at 360; they're selling now at 800, and rising steadily. That man Macrobe is a genius."

Thus M. de Tirecruchon. Horace had expected a little more austerity from men who gave themselves out as the defenders of public morals, the champions of right against might, the victims of oppression, &c.; but he soon discovered that liberal opinions and a good-natured tolerance of successful

capitalists go very well hand in hand. Even the Red Republican who was sucking iced-punch through a straw, admitted that there were few things like the shares of the *Crédit Parisien*, and that though he despised riches he had bought two dozen of them. Excessive strait-lacing was out of fashion at the *Café des Variétés*, and it was only in his own editor, Nestor Roche, whose rugged soul was all of a piece, that Horace found that uncompromising sternness of principle which he had been disposed to think was inseparable from republicanism.

It was his habit to go and call upon Nestor Roche every day with either a leader or some occasional notes; and these visits afforded him the opportunity of learning what a real talent there lies in careful editing. Nestor Roche was not a man of many words, and the few he uttered were apt to mislead those who would have taken them as an earnest of the man's secret thoughts. In conversation he seemed indifferent and sceptical; in reality he was imbued to the marrow with theories of his own, and cherished, with a child-like veneration, the political creed in which he had been educated. This became, to a certain extent, apparent when he corrected the articles of his younger contributors; for, without appearing to do it designedly, he would, by a word inserted or expunged here and there, alter the whole tone of passages which jarred on any of his favorite chords. Men seldom make very good journalists until thirty, and Horace's writings profited considerably by the searching discipline to which they were subjected. They left the editor's hands strengthened and furbished, and yet the corrections were so few, that the most susceptible of literary vanities would not have found a pretext for taking umbrage. Horace was often astonished at the fine figure his own articles cut in print, and even wondered slightly at his own talent. Amongst his brother journalists too, it soon came to be remarked that young Horace Gerold was an elegant and thoughtful writer. The truth was, he wrote neither better nor worse than most intelligent young men of four-and-twenty, and so the public would have judged had his compositions passed straight out of his own hands into those of the printer.

Invitations and civilities began to flow in apace. Society does not run after those who shun it, but it soon adopts those who make any advances. From mixing with journalists at the café and elsewhere, it was not long before Horace was solicited to dine with them at their homes and meet their wives or connections. Then came introductions to eminent statesmen who had held high office under former governments



and deemed it politic to surround themselves with the rising men of the press and the bar, with a view to a possible return to power in the future. There were also nobles of the Faubourg St. Germain, who, to cement the coalition of all parties against the Usurper, filled their drawing-rooms once or twice a month with human salads concocted of all the prominent elements then in Opposition.

Horace was everywhere received pretty much as a budding hero. His good looks, his literary and oratorical merits — (recommendations always powerful in France) — would alone have sufficed to open many doors to him; but the interest he inspired was heightened by the mystery in which he enshrouded his real name and distinguished birth. At the *Café des Variétés* few knew or cared whether he was a nobleman or not; but it was very different in society where there were ladies. A little to his vexation, although that vexation was not unmingled with a small dose of incipient complacency, Horace Gerold discovered that his titles were a secret for nobody, and that the fact of his repudiating them as he did was accounted to him for stoicism and abnegation beyond the common. In fact, he would never have suspected how hard it was not to wear one's coronet had not people marvelled more than once, when they thought him out of ear-shot, that any young man should prefer such a name as Gerold to that of *Clairefontaine*.

One evening after he had heard himself addressed as *M. le Marquis* five or six times by different persons in the course of an hour, he turned rather impatiently to the lady with whom he was conversing, and said, "Why do people insist upon labelling one with these absurd titles?"

This was at a rout given in the hospitable mansion of a very famous man — none other than the small and eloquent *M. Tiré*, who had been Prime Minister under *Louis Philippe*, and had helped not a little, by the way, in bringing the dynasty he loved to grief. The lady in conversation with Horace was an extremely pretty *Baroness de Margauld*, wife of an Orleanist banker.

"Why do you call titles absurd?" she replied. "I wear mine bravely enough, and should be sorry not to possess it."

"I don't mean that they are absurd for everybody," he answered blushing; "though even in your case, *Madame*, I might well say, of what use is a title to you? But it is absurd to inflict upon me a distinction which I do not choose to bear."

"You must blame your own friends for that," said the *Baroness*, with a little tinge of slyness. "If they will sound your trum-

pet so loudly, you must expect people to do you honor."

"What friends? what trumpet?" inquired Horace, with innocence.

"Oh! you have so many friends, *M. Gerold*; but to cite only one instance, there is *M. Macrobe*, who misses no occasion of praising your good qualities; he was talking to my husband, only this morning, of your high principles and your generosity."

"*M. Macrobe* my friend!" exclaimed Horace, sceptically; "why, he is the man against whom I pleaded the other day."

"I am certain he bears you no ill-will, then," rejoined the *Baroness*, "but why did you plead against him? Surely you do not believe all the wicked stories that have been circulated against him?"

"I neither believe, nor disbelieve," answered Horace, "but it seems to me that people judge *M. Macrobe* much more leniently than they would if he had failed in his curious speculations instead of enriching himself as he has done."

The *Baroness* gave a pretty little shrug.

"Is not success the best touchstone of merit? I believe, for my part, it is the touchstone of honesty, too."

"Of honesty!" echoed Horace with surprise.

"Yes, my confessor says so. He asserts that Heaven would not allow bad men to prosper, and that consequently when we see a man very wealthy and successful, we may be sure he has deserved his good fortune, however much his enemies may say to the contrary."

"Truly a convenient moralist," observed Horace, smiling; "a sort of man to consult when one's conscience is in trouble."

"Yes, he is indeed," answered the *Baroness* naïvely. "You should know him. His name is *Father Glabre* of the Society of Jesus."

"I guessed the Society of Jesus," responded Horace, "and I suppose *Father Glabre* exemplifies his principles by being a Bonapartist. He must regard the success of the *coup-d'état* as the divine consecration of Napoleon."

"*Father Glabre* never talks politics," answered *Mdme. de Margauld*. "He says that one of the Apostles enjoined us to submit ourselves to the powers that be. And, after all, what does it matter who is King or Emperor?" added she fixing her bright eyes on the young man; "life was not given us to spend in wrangling as to who should sit in a velvet arm-chair. Why cannot we put up with the government we have, and try and make the best of it, it would be so much pleasanter."

Horace had too much tact to wage a war of opinions with a lady, but he said gayly,

"All I wonder at, Madame, is that, holding these views, you should risk facing such a sturdy anti-imperialist as our host."

"Oh! I come here because of the nice people one meets," answered the baroness, playing with her fan. "If one desires to see men of any real worth in art, or literature, or politics, one must look for them in Opposition drawing-rooms. It has been the great mistake of the Emperor that instead of calling to him all the men who had rendered themselves illustrious under past reigns, he has made himself a court with a crowd of persons whom nobody knows. It's a pity, for I adore talent, and think that a sovereign cannot have too many distinguished men about him."

"I daresay he had no choice," muttered Horace a little dryly. "Doubtless he would have been glad enough to fill his court with distinguished men, if distinguished men had consented to be employed for that purpose."

"Then you believe it is the men of talent who are holding aloof from him."

"Why, assuredly, Madame; have we not the proof in M. Tiré himself?"

"How good it is to be young and to have all one's illusions," murmured she, with arch but not unsympathizing raillery at the young man. "Do you see, M. Gerold, that what has so angered all our great friends is, that they have been played? Their vanity is stung. They deemed it impossible that a stable government could ever be established without their help, and the way in which the Emperor has dispensed with their assistance, has been like telling them of what small account they were in the land. Our host, M. Tiré, is a charming man, but as vain as they say we women are. He thought himself necessary, and the Emperor has obliged him to drink gall. Depend upon it, if he were offered place to-morrow, he would accept, and with alacrity. He would consider such an offer an avowal of weakness; it would soothe his ruffled self-love; and self-love always goes before principle."

"You take a dark view of human nature," said Horace, rather moodily.

"I take the same view of it as you will when you have been ten years in society like me," replied Madame de Margauld with half a sigh. "You are a rising man, M. Gerold. If you aspire to lead your contemporaries you must not estimate them above their worth."

The same night, going home, Horace revolved these last words in his mind with a dawning and discomforting conviction, that a society which condoned the shortcomings of such people as M. Macrobe, for the sake of the gold they possessed, did not deserve

to be esteemed very highly. Somehow, though, he felt that his own contempt for the capitalist was lessening. Suspect and dislike a man as we will, we can seldom be totally indifferent to his repaying our ill-feelings by going about and speaking well of us.

It was long past midnight when Horace reached his lodging, and he walked quietly in on tiptoe for fear of awaking his brother. Something like a pang went through his heart on thinking of Emile. The two brothers were seeing less and less of each other every day. Since Horace had taken to journalism, their ways lay apart. They no longer breakfasted and dined together at the modest *table-d'hôte*. Horace frequented the restaurants of the Boulevards, Montmartre, and Des Italiens; he rarely got up before ten in the morning; spent his evenings either out at parties or at the theatre, and when he returned home towards the small hours, usually found Emile in bed. On this occasion, however, the younger brother was still up, at his desk, writing.

Horace crept in softly behind him and put an arm round his neck: "Working so late, old fellow?" he said kindly.

"Yes, Horace," answered Emile, squeezing his hand. He pointed to two or three parcels of papers tied with pink tape, and added, "I have been intrusted with a brief that requires some study."

This was putting the case very mildly, for ever since that *début*, in which he had disappointed the hopes of the unprofessional public, but won golden opinions from the solicitors, Emile had been intrusted with several briefs, all most arid, voluminous, and tough. Solicitors were delighted to find a young man who was devoid of vanity, and had no ambition to make himself a name at the expense of his clients. Briefs were offered him which were not important enough for the stars of the profession, but which demanded an immense amount of reading, and required to be handled by a man of talent, content to work hard with small prospect of glory, and, often, for not very high remuneration. Barristers of this kind are scarce in all lands, but in France, perhaps, more so than elsewhere. Whence it happened that Emile was getting as much employment as he could manage.

He was looking pale however, so that, after they had talked a little while together, Horace prevailed upon him to go to bed. They wished each other affectionately good-night; but before retiring to his own room, Horace passed into his study to see if there were any letters. There were several, chiefly invitations, and in the midst of the heap, a little packet fastened with blue ribbons.

"From whom does this come?" said he, returning to his brother's room with the parcel opened, and displaying a dozen cambric bands and as many pocket-handkerchiefs, exquisitely embroidered with his initials.

"Oh! I forgot to tell you," exclaimed Emile, already in bed, and raising himself on his elbow; "they were brought up to-day by our landlord's daughter, in return for a work-box which she says you gave her."

"Kind little Georgette!" ejaculated Horace.

"She seems an amiable girl," continued Emile; "but I met her father to-day in the street, and he tells me that she is growing serious and silent, and doesn't look well."

## CHAPTER XI.

### LOVE AND WAR.

No, Georgette had not been well lately, and the excellent M. Pochemolle, his wife, and even M. Alcibiade Pochemolle, had been growing a little uneasy at seeing that the blooming young girl, once so gladsome, had become by degrees unaccountably subdued and pensive. They questioned her as to whether she felt unwell, but she replied that she had no consciousness of being otherwise than usual — that there was nothing the matter.

And yet matter there was, though probably Georgette was sincere enough in asserting that she was not conscious of it. Several weeks had elapsed since the present of the work-box by Horace Gerold. She had hemmed him the cambric bands; then, fearing that the gift would not be complete, she had wished to add a dozen handkerchiefs, and this had taken time — it takes time to work twelve times over the letters H. G., when there are so many pauses for reverie between the stitches. And during the weeks that she had slowly plied her needle in marking the cambric with the two initials, she had seen Horace pass the window every morning and lift his hat and smile to her as he went on his way to the newspaper-office; and she had heard of his having entered journalism and of his new triumphs in that profession. Out of compliment to his lodger, and although he indignantly repudiated the doctrines advocated in that print, M. Pochemolle had made it a point to subscribe to the "Sentinelle," and in the evening, when she retired to her room, Georgette took the paper with her and would sit up in her bed reading the articles by Horace. She did

not always understand them at first, but she would read them over and over until she did; and if she was not successful after many readings, then she would read the signature a multitude of times, and that pleased her: she fancied, somehow, the letters were in his own handwriting. When she had read the papers she put them all carefully by in a drawer. M. Alcibiade Pochemolle sometimes wondered what became of them.

She no longer carried up their letters to the brothers when they were brought to the wrong door. There is an instinct in these things. But she would gaze with curious scrutiny at the envelopes directed in feminine hands. When there were none such she was happier.

She had noticed, with the quick eye of a woman for such trifles, that Horace Gerold was turning fashionable. He had an eyeglass, wore light-colored gloves and lacquered boots, smoked cigars instead of the cigarettes which he used to twirl himself, and always came home at night in cabs. She could hear the vehicles stop in the street outside, and then his step as he mounted the staircase. She never went to sleep until she heard that step — not if it were delayed till four o'clock in the morning. One day, Horace had come into the shop and brought them a private box for the opera — she had once remarked in his presence that she loved music. The performance was *Robert le Diable*. Nothing could have been more hospitable or more full of tact than the arrangements made by him for their comfort. He had chartered a private brougham to convey and bring them back; and in the second entr'acte had paid them a visit in their box, bringing two bouquets, one for herself and one for her mother, and a fine *cornet* of bonbons, without which the happiness of a Parisian *bourgeoise* at the "playhouse" is never complete. Upon the drawing up of the curtain he had discreetly taken his leave. It had been a great evening for everybody. M. Alcibiade Pochemolle had never put on so much bear's-grease in the course of his existence, and the sight of the *corps-de-ballet* made his fingers tingle; M. Pochemolle had reckoned that there were at least a hundred square yards of canvas in the drop-scene; Madame Pochemolle had been much impressed by the resurrection of the ghost-nuns in the church-yard scene. As for Georgette, she had remarked but one thing, and that was, that Horace on returning to his stall had bowed to several stately and beautiful ladies in the boxes, and that at the close of the third act he had appeared in the box of one covered with diamonds, whom M. Pochemolle had recognized for a Marchioness of

the noble Faubourg. Alone in her room after the opera, and with her bouquet in her hand, the poor child shivered mournfully. Who was she that she could hope to vie with ladies who wore diamonds and were Marchionesses? It was evident M. Gerold had never given her a thought.

Nevertheless, she had moments of flitting compensation; and her cheeks mantled on the morrow of the day when Horace had found her present on his table and came down to thank her with his bright voice, which seemed to her more refined and gentle each time she heard it. He drew out one of the handkerchiefs, which was lightly scented with *mignonette*, admired the embroidery of the initials—indeed no common piece of workmanship—and playfully observed he intended keeping this fine linen for great occasions: “My wedding-day, for instance,” said he, “providing I ever do marry.” And at these words she turned pale anew; it was like a cloud passing rapidly over a furtive sunbeam.

The probabilities are that Horace did not remark this pallor, though he could not help noticing in a general way that she was changed since he had spoken with her last. He told her how sorry he was to hear she had been unwell, and drew forth the rather faltering answer that, indeed, she felt in perfect health.

This time he was struck with the tone of the reply, and it recurred to him at intervals in the course of the day, and again once or twice during the week when passing by the shop he remarked that *Georgette's* eyes lowered under his with a new expression which he did not understand. Then this circumstance faded out of his mind under the pressure of graver pre-occupations which soon beset him.

He underwent the common lot of Parisian journalists, and got engaged in a quarrel with a brother penman in the opposite camp. The fault was not his, nor altogether his adversary's, but that of the admirable political system under which they both lived. The conditions of the French Press were then such that journalists could not well help coming to loggerheads, try as they might. The unlucky law *Tinguy-Laboulie* (named after the two old gentlemen who promoted it), which rendered it binding upon the writer of an article to sign his name to it, had completely disorganized the old anonymous Press by substituting individualism for combined action, and conflict of personalities for polemic of opinions. The staff of a newspaper was no longer a disciplined company, but a band of sharp-shooters, each of the members of which, being personally responsible for the opinions he emitted, naturally did

his utmost to assert himself. Had the Press been free, the discussions between man and man need not necessarily have degenerated into violence, for it is not the tendency of educated men to abuse one another when they have fair arguments at their command. But, hemmed in as journalists were on every side by penal clauses, which made it impossible to write on any subject with latitude, the temptation to glide from trammelled controversy into exchange of personal invectives was often irresistible. Opposition writers would break out into vituperation, as a train will jump off the line because obstacles are set in the way of its straight course; but more frequently the aggressors were the members of the semi-official Press. These gentlemen, being obliged to defend the acts of their Government, by hook or by crook, might have found the task an up-hill one had the only weapons allowed them been those of logic; but matters were much simplified when they could champion Imperial policy with a pen in one hand and a foil in the other. If the pen found nothing to say, the foil came to the rescue, and it was not an unusual thing to attempt silencing troublesome writers in the liberal ranks by picking a series of bones with them, until they either held their peace, overawed, or retaliated by spitting a few of their antagonists one after the other. This was what was tried with Horace.

There was an Imperialist paper named “*Le Pavois*,” and on the staff of it one M. Paul de Cosaque, a Creole, with a frizzly head of hair, large round eyes, and hands like small shoulders of mutton. This promising youth, though not above five and twenty, was the Quixote of his party, serving the dynasty in a devoted Creole way, and hating oppositionists as a tough young bull-dog might vermin. He was not long in taking offence at the successes of Horace. Hearing his name so constantly mentioned, he ended by growing tired of it, and did not conceal his longing for an opportunity of coming into collision with one whose popularity he was pleased to regard as in some sort a personal affront to himself. So he proceeded to do what is called in journalistic phrase “laying a man on a gridiron,” which means that he collared Horace Gerold and served him up every day to the readers of the “*Pavois*,” skewered through and through with an epigram. They were somewhat blunt, these epigrams of M. Paul de Cosaque, but the intention of them was plain enough, and, at the outset, Horace was for despatching a couple of seconds to request that satisfaction might be afforded him. But, with a shrug, Nestor Roche pooh-poohed this notion, saying it was

best to take no heed of the barking of a cur; so that M. Paul, perceiving a reluctance to quarrel, set down his adversary for a chicken-heart, and began, unwisely to crow cock-a-whoop before the time.

Now one day, after this fleabiting had been going on for some weeks, Horace wrote a leader in the "Sentinelle" on the subject of the privacy of the parliamentary debates. It was a very temperate article, though not without a dash of acid, and it had been ably revised by Nestor Roche, who had given it the backbone it at first wanted. Several foreign papers, and most of the liberal provincial organs, quoted it; and as the law which debarred the public from knowing what went on in their own Parliament was an ever-chafing sore, the author received a good many congratulations from Boulevard politicians. This was just the sort of occasion M. Paul de Cosaque had been looking for. He was down on the article in a trice, dipping his pen in his smartest verjuice, and howling out abuse much as a faithful negro might do who had seen his master's shins scraped. Horace was on a visit to his editor at the prison of Ste. Pélagie when the number of the "Pavois" containing M. Paul's attack fell into his hands. Nestor Roche, Max Delormay, and another captured journalist named Jean Kerjou of the "Gazette des Boulevards," were sitting at the table writing. The printer's devil, Trigger, who had just brought all the morning papers in a vast bundle under his arm, was planted on a chair, whence his legs dangled, and his one eye squinted, waiting for "copy." Horace himself was lounging on the ottoman and smoking as he read.

He started up with the color rising to his face and an indignant glare in his eyes.

"Look at this, M. Roche," he said, and began to stride about the room, biting his lips. "It is time this should end now. I shall send the fellow my seconds this afternoon."

"No; wait till to-morrow," put in Jean Kerjou. "I shall be out of prison then, and I'll act for you. Who is the man?"

Nestor Roche ran his quick glance through the column and presently answered: "Well, my boy, it's one of the necessities of our trade to fight as well as scribble. This whelp's trying to draw you; you must break his teeth. But, first, we'll just give him a rap with his own weapons and make his copper-colored knuckles ring."

The four journalists were soon in consultation round the board with the open number of the "Pavois" before them. What they wanted was to draw up a retort which should strike at the weak place in M. Paul's armor, and make that sword-clinker yell.

This weak place was not difficult to find. M. Paul, like many other worthy people, was not above the foible of vanity, and had tacked on to his patronymic a name which did not lawfully belong to him. His real style and title was Paul Panier; but Panier being an ugly name, signifying "basket," he, or rather he and his father between them, had discarded it in favor of the more sounding designation De Cosaque, which was derived from the country residence of the elder Panier. But these usurpations are formally prohibited by law under pain of imprisonment; and it was, therefore, very much like throwing projectiles out of a glass-house when M. Paul delivered himself as follows, in his attack upon Horace:—

... "As for these so-called Republicans, who go about under false names, being ashamed to wear the titles which their fathers bore, lest they should compromise their popularity with the rabble; as for these self-styled Democrats, who refuse homage to a king, but fawn sycophantly upon the mob, and see no better way of currying favor with their masters than by making litter of all the distinctions their own ancestors won, just like those low birds who befoul their own nests;—as for these men, we know what is their object in asking that the debates of the Chamber may again be thrown open to public audiences. They have not forgotten 1793, when the galleries were filled with drunken trollops, whose blood-thirsty howls gave our precious Republicans the courage they needed to send old men, women, and fallen kings to the scaffold; nor 1848, when the scum of our galleys infested the Strangers' tribunes to cheer the dismal buffooneries of such men as the citizen Manuel Gerold. We should not wonder if those who ask that the tribunes may be thrown open again, had an eye to some day becoming deputies themselves; but, being aware of the contempt with which their utterances would be received by men of sense, they wish to make sure of having an audience of kindred spirits—like those tenth-rate actors who, unable to excite applause in the stalls and boxes, pick some poor devils out of the gutter and hire them for five sous a night to go and clap their hands in the pit."

There was nothing uncommon in the form of this effusion; it was the true semi-official style of the period.

Nestor Roche prepared the following reply, which Horace signed:—

**"The MARQUIS OF CLAIREFONTAINE to  
M. PAUL PANIER.**

"The gentleman on the staff of the  
'Pavois' who calls himself M. 'de Cosaque,'

is respectfully informed that the undersigned writer will resume the title he inherited from his ancestors on the day his courteous antagonist does likewise. M. Paul 'de Cosaque' will doubtless see fit to perform this resumption without delay, lest the Public Prosecutor, forgetting that M. 'de Cosaque' is a Bonapartist, and remembering only that he is a transgressor of the law, which forbids persons to adopt nobiliary particles to which they have no right, should order his transfer to Mazas, and so afford him the opportunity of making a closer acquaintance with those 'scum of the galleys,' with whose language, as well as with whose habits, M. 'de Cosaque' appears so conversant.

"HORACE GEROLD."

This again was a very fair specimen of an Opposition retort.

"This will save you the trouble of sending a challenge," remarked the editor. "The whelp will probably begin operations himself;" and he handed the slip to Triger, who, after receiving his usual instruction not to loiter with fellow *gamins*, shambled off with it to the printing-office.

The effect, however, was not quite what Nestor Roche and his acolytes expected. On reading the stinging paragraph M. Paul de Cosaque blanched, but he did not set out in quest of seconds. He caught up his hat and went off prowling in the direction of the Boulevards, grinding his white creole teeth, and clinching his fists so tight that the nails left four dents in each of the brown palms. He wanted to find Horace and knock him down; then fight him with steel afterwards. There is no profession like literature for making a man mild and brotherly.

Horace was breakfasting at one of the great restaurants, and with him, as it chanced, was Jean Kerjou, the man of the "Gazette des Boulevards," who had been released from confinement in the morning. He was a Breton, this journalist, short, but thick and powerful, and amazingly prompt with his hands, like all Bretons. He had taken a fancy to Horace, who knew but little of him, and the pair were, so to say, watering their new-sprung friendship in this breakfast.

Suddenly Jean Kerjou, who sat opposite the door, dissecting a woodcock, abandoned his bird, crying, "Haro, Gerold, look out!" and sprang to his legs. The mulatto face of M. Paul was darkening the doorway, and in less than two seconds was within blow-reach of them.

M. Paul held a newspaper crunched up in his right hand. He strode up to the table, jabbered something unintelligible,

and, before any one in the crowded restaurant could stop him, delivered a tremendous cuff, which missed Horace's head by an ace, alighted, with a loud thwack, on the countenance of a waiter, and sent him sprawling on to a table where lunched a peaceful English family, who set up piercing cries.

There was an inconceivable uproar, amidst which a huge slap resounded, and simultaneously an unholy crash of broken glass, as some one not distinguishable was hurled, all of a lump, into a corner. The slap was administered by Horace: the crash was caused by Jean Kerjou, who had caught up M. Paul like a bundle of linen, and shot him to the other end of the room.

Twenty arms at once pinned down the creole, gnashing and struggling to rise; twenty others pulled back Horace Gerold and Jean Kerjou, to prevent further mischief. Then uprose a deafening contestation as to who was the aggressor—the English family shrieking all together that it was the negro, and the waiter thundering that it was Horace, seeing that, had the blow fallen on his cheek as it was meant to do, half the disturbance would have been avoided. In the midst of the hubbub entered two policemen, who took down the names of everybody all round, apprehended the waiter on the ground that, being splashed all over with lobster-sauce, he was presumably the culprit; and, on being eventually induced to release him, retired bewildered, leaving the field clear to a gentleman with a countenance like a weasel's, who, having been witness of the whole scene, stepped forward, with his mouth full, and sputtered, "I maintain, it's an act of the most brutal aggression. M. Paul de Cosaque, you've conducted yourself like a villain. Do you hear that?"

There was no mistaking this twanging voice. It was M. Macrobe's. He had been lunching with a stock-broking friend, and this friend, fearful that he would get himself into trouble, now sought to restrain him by the coat-tails; but M. Macrobe would not be restrained. He rushed up to the infuriated creole, who was with difficulty kept from flying at his throat, and shouted, "Men like yourself are a disgrace to the Press, M. Panier. You convert what should be the noblest of professions into a bravo's trade. You deserve to be stamped out like a pestilent toad, and if M. Gerold doesn't kill you, I will."

M. Paul de Cosaque was forcibly dragged out of the restaurant. M. Macrobe turned, apparently trembling with the holiest indignation and sympathy, and walked to where Horace and his friend were standing.

The least Horace Gerold could do for a man who had taken his part so warmly was to thank him, which he did at once and with gratitude, though coldly. M. Macrobe, not minding the coldness, continued to strike whilst the iron was hot.

"My dear young friend," said he, "that man is a very cut-throat. He has had half a dozen men out already; and will nip your brilliant career short if we let him; but trust to me: I will be your second. It was he who first raised his hand on you. This makes you the offended party, and gives you choice of weapons."

Horace did not much relish the proposal of M. Macrobe to be his second; but to refuse would, under the circumstances, have been both discourteous and ungracious. Besides, Jean Kerjou did not leave him time to do so, for, delighted with the pluck of "the small man with the ferret face," he held out his hand, and said, "Sir, my name is Jean Kerjou, and I am M. Gerold's other second. Between us we will see our friend well through this scrape."

Further breakfast being impossible, Horace threw down five napoleons to the landlord to pay for the breakages, and two more to the waiter to soothe his throbbing jaw. Then he, Jean Kerjou, and the banker, slipped out by a back door to escape the mob, which had already congregated outside, wide-mouthed, and so home to Horace's lodgings. The two policemen, before retiring, had suggested that everybody should call upon the Commissary of Police during the afternoon to explain matters; but this formality was omitted, for the police official could neither have undone that which was accomplished, nor prevented that which was to come. In the course of a couple of hours Jean Kerjou and M. Macrobe had routed out Emile from a musty court, in which he was acting as junior in a fearfully musty case, and hastily apprised him of what had happened: after which they had called upon M. de Cosaque, and arranged a rendezvous with the latter's two friends at five. By dinner-time the duel was all settled. It was to come off at seven the next morning, in the Bois de Vincennes, with foils.

Of course the news spread quickly along the Boulevards, and was received with no inconsiderable glee by the do-nothing portion of the public. These tiffs between journalists were the one thing that saved the press of the period from monotony, and a duel was always a welcome little episode. All the evening papers gave accounts of the fracas at the restaurant; but, in order not to spoil sport, i.e., bring the police on the ground, they fraternally abstained from divulging the spot where the fight

was to take place. Nevertheless, they printed the names of the contending parties in full, with those of their seconds, and hinted significantly that M. Paul de Cosaque was one of the best swordsmen in Paris.

By the advice of his two friends, who took bodily charge of him during the evening, Horace dined lightly, and gave an hour to fencing, in which he was already tolerably proficient. At half-past nine he was escorted to his door, with injunctions to go to bed as soon as possible, and be up by six the next day.

The day might be called an eventful one, but he mounted his staircase with a very quiet pulse for a man who was going to risk his life at sunrise.

Just as he reached the *entresol*, however, a door was timidly held ajar, and he was confronted by Georgette.

She had read of the impending duel in the newspaper, and ever since her mind had been distracted by visions of blood and death. She was pale and terrified, and held the newspaper in her hands. When she saw Horace she said nothing, but shed a few tears.

He was touched by this unexpected meeting, and by the simple display of grief, of which he could not but guess the cause.

"Why are you crying, Mademoiselle Georgette?" he said, gently.

She made no answer, but pointed to the paragraph in the newspaper.

He took one of her unresisting hands in his, and said with gayety, "But there is nothing to be afraid of in that. Duels happen every day."

"You may be killed," she sobbed.

"And if I were, would you grieve for me?" he asked, half in jest, half gravely.

She threw him a sad, reproachful look.

"Don't speak like that, Monsieur Horace; you know how unhappy I — how unhappy we should all be," added she, correcting herself.

He took her other hand, looked into her eyes, and said, "I shall run no danger Georgette."

This was the first time he called her Georgette. She strove gently to free herself: but the effort was short-lived.

"Promise me you won't fight to-morrow," she faltered.

"I promise you he shall not hurt me, Georgette," he answered, encircling her waist with his arm.

"Oh, but if he should" — she said, making another feeble attempt to disengage herself.

"But he won't, Georgette."

And, stooping, he pressed a kiss on her lips.

But theirs was the bliss of a few instants only, for at that moment the house-door opened, then closed, and the steps of a lodger in the vestibule below warned them to separate.

"Good-night, Georgette," he whispered. "I shall be safe to-morrow if you return me my kiss. It will be my talisman."

He was still holding her waist. She blushed; looked over the balusters to see if the lodger was coming, and then returned him his kiss.

The next morning betimes, one of the keepers of the Bois de Vincennes, returning to his cottage from night-duty, beheld two broughams, following each other at an interval of a few minutes, sweep along the road to the race-course, and stop near a secluded knoll, distant some couple of hundred yards from the Grand Stand; and, being a man of experience, he knew what that meant. Chancing to be further a shrewd man, he resolved upon retracing his steps, and, instead of going home, to take up his position at a distance; though within eye-view, so as to be ready to come forward when every thing was over and earn an honest twenty-franc piece, by undertaking to preserve secrecy. To these ends he ensconced himself behind the trunks of some felled trees. M. Macrobe, who had managed matters for Horace, had done every thing very well. He had brought his brougham, with store of lint, bandages, restoratives, &c., concealed in the pocket; the most eminent surgeon in Paris on one of the front seats; and a pair of the finest duelling-foils in a chamois bag. He had quite won the graces of Jean Kerjou, both by his energy, his practical hints, and the loud-spoken sympathy he evinced for Horace. In sooth, M. Macrobe had been somewhat gloomy the preceding afternoon, on his principal insisting upon fighting with foils; and his gloom had not cleared up until he had seen how Horace bore himself in the fencing-school. Horace, though he never boasted of it, and never sought to air his talent, was a good fencer; having been originally taught by his father, who, first as a nobleman, then as an officer, and finally as a journalist, had served a treble apprenticeship in sword-craft. M. Macrobe was elated to see the manner in which he could parry and lunge, and though he would still have preferred pistols, on the ground that a man with steady nerves can blow his adversary out of life with this weapon, and not allow time to be shot at in return, yet he felt considerably re-assured as to his principal's prospects even against such an antagonist as M. de Cosaque.

Horace Gerold's party were the first on the ground. Upon the others appearing, the eight gentlemen all bowed together, but there were no negotiations attempted—the insults exchanged being such as could only be washed out by blood-shed. The two seconds of M. de Cosaque—one a colonel of the Imperial Guard and a man of the *coup-d'état*, the other, M. de Gargousse, an official deputy—selected the ground along with M. Macrobe and Kerjou, and then examined the different pairs of foils that had been brought. By common consent those of M. Macrobe were chosen; they were very ribbons of steel, that could be bent so that the point touched the handle without snapping. Whilst these preliminaries were being adjusted, the two principals took off their coats, waistcoats, hats, cravats, and boots—so as not to slip on the wet morning grass;—and opened their shirts a little, as etiquette required, to show that they wore no mail-coat next the skin. Meantime, the two surgeons, standing aside and conversing in a low voice, fumbled in their pockets to open their surgical cases, in order that no time might be lost when their cheerful services were needed. The morning was deliciously balmy; and in the wood could be heard the tinkling of a cart-bell, and the lively voice of the carter speaking to his horse as they jogged together to their work. It is only human beings who could think of fighting on such a morning as that.

There was a silence. The combatants were face to face, two yards apart. The Colonel having measured the foils, gave one to each, then joined the two weapons by the points, and, stepping back with head uncovered, said, "Allez, Messieurs." Then the guard ensconced behind the fallen trees saw this:—

The strongest of the two duellists, he with the dark face and large hands, bore down upon his adversary with a terrific onslaught, forcing him to "break" and parry wildly; then, when it seemed as though the quickness of the retreat must cause the slighter combatant to lose his balance, the other made a rapid, furious lunge. The attack was so formidable that any but a first-rate fencer would have been carried off his legs by it. The guard—an old soldier—winced. But the slighter man rallied with desperate strength, struck up the sword that was within a hair's breadth of his heart, plunged forward, and with the suddenness of lightning thrust his foil through his adversary's chest, up to the hilt. The whole thing did not last fifty seconds. M. Paul de Cosaque rolled over on the grass, with the foil still in him, quite dead.

Four out of the seven spectators turned



pale. The Colonel glanced at Horace, and saluted him with respect. M. Macrobe pressed up and wrung his hand. The guard loomed from behind his trees and came up slowly, in pursuit of his twenty francs.

## CHAPTER XII.

### M. MACROBE OFFERS MONEY.

THE lucky hazard that had thrown M. Macrobe in the way of Horace at the restaurant, had gratified one of that sagacious financier's most deep-rooted wishes. A few days before, talking with M. Louchard, the Commissary of Police, with whom, as with a good many strange persons, he was on affable terms, the latter had said to him: "By the way, M. Macrobe, do you know that the young radical who spoke against you in the libel-suit, is by birth a marquis, and owns vast wealth?"

"Yes, I know it," responded M. Macrobe curiously; "but how did *you* know it?"

"Why, after the trial, seeing that the popularity of this young man threatened to become a danger to public order, the Prefect sent me to search his apartments." Here M. Louchard lowered his voice, for they were in a public place, and gave an account of his domiciliary visit to the brothers' lodgings, omitting that episode, however, which related to the threat of Horace to break his head. "And, odd to say," he concluded, "we found a deed by which the old Republican, Manuel Gerold, makes over to his two sons the whole of the estates of Hautbourg during his own lifetime."

M. Macrobe pricked up his ears.

"Have you that deed still in your possession, M. Louchard?"

"Why, yes," answered the commissary, glad to interest the powerful financier. "I took it to the Prefect, who read it, but ordered me to return it, the document being a family paper of no use to us. I should have done so ere now, but forgot. However, this deed has not been so useless as M. le Prefect pretends: for it has proved to us that these two young Gerolds are an extremely suspicious pair. Having wealth, they yet live as if they had nothing, which is evidence enough that they must lay out their money to unlawful ends. We suspect they are subsidizing secret societies, and we have got them under close supervision.

"Oh! they are under police surveillance?"

"The very closest. We have men watch-

ing them day and night. There is not a thing they do but we know of it."

"Yet, I'll be bound you don't know who they bank with, though this piece of knowledge might have stood you in better stead than many others which I dare say you have picked up." And M. Macrobe looked rather sarcastically at the man of Police.

"No, we've not found out who they bank with," answered M. Louchard reflectively. "And I suppose *you* can't tell us."

"They bank with us," replied M. Macrobe carelessly; "but I can't tell you any thing as to where their money goes. The revenue of the estates is paid into our hands every quarter-day by the agent; but it is drawn out again almost as soon by this same agent with cheques signed by old M. Gerold. That's all we know about it." Then turning pensive, he added, "You will show me that deed, M. Louchard."

"Willingly," rejoined the other, who counted that his civility would be repaid by financial hints; since none knew better than M. Macrobe how to give hints as to securities worth dabbling in, and shares which, though prosperous in aspect, had best be avoided. Everybody gambled on the Bourse in those days of jobbing, and M. Louchard did like the rest. But it was not every one who had such a master tipster as M. Macrobe to guide him.

The two went together to M. Louchard's office, and the banker had a sight of the deed of gift, which he scrutinized long and narrowly. In return for the favor he thus advised M. Louchard:—"The shares of the *Crédit Parisien* are quoted to-day at 850. I'll let you have twenty of them at 800. You shall pay me in a month. Hold fast to them till they're quoted at 1,500, which they will be in less than a couple of years, and then sell out." M. Louchard almost went down on all fours, thanking him with transports as a benefactor.

The deed of gift set M. Macrobe thinking. He was an astute man, and soon put his thoughts into plain figures. So long as he had imagined that Horace Gerold would have to await his father's death before stepping into the Hautbourg estate, he had treated the angling of him as a thing that could be undertaken leisurely; but now that Horace was actually master of his property, he was a fish to bait and hook with the least delay possible. M. Macrobe had reached that pitch of wealth, where gold comes flowing in like a Pactolus on the immutable principle by which rivers always roll their waters towards the sea, which has enough without them. But his were paper riches. They were the riches that give a man consideration on 'Change, make his name

familiar among brokers, and cause the outside public to speak of him as a warm man. M. Macrobe, however, desired something more than this. With opulence had come the ambition which opulence begets. The enriched stockjobber longed to be somebody, and the surest way to become somebody is to be at the head of an ancient name and a substantial landed estate — neither of which essentials M. Macrobe possessed. Under the circumstances, it was not very surprising that a man, accustomed like him to put things in black and white, should think of his daughter, and propose making her minister to his honest ambition. If she should marry a nobleman with influence at his command, that influence would naturally be at the service of her father, and give him a lift into that political world, where M. Macrobe now longed to try his powers. He turned over this thought maturely and in an infinite variety of lights, but always with the same result, to wit, that Horace Gerold and his daughter Angélique were evidently made for one another.

With M. Macrobe to plan was to resolve. Obstacles did not daunt him. He had surmounted so many already to make himself what he was, that the aversion which the two Gerolds testified towards him struck him as a mere vexatious circumstance — nothing more. That he should finally overcome the ill-feeling, he did not for a moment doubt; and he set himself to the concoction of sundry diplomatic schemes, by which he and Horace were to be brought together. But the merit of these schemes he never had the need to test, for as we have seen, hazard suddenly played his cards for him, and did more in a day than he, by his wits unaided, could have done in a twelve-month.

After the duel Horace was bound to him by one of those ties which men of honor regard as strong. He had espoused the young man's quarrel openly and fearlessly in public, thus risking his life for him — there being no question that, had M. Paul de Cosaque triumphed, he would have visited M. Macrobe's interference in such a way as to lay that gentleman and his schemes of glory six good feet under ground. Horace might regret not having acted with more caution in accepting M. Macrobe's friendly offices; but it was too late for repentance now. He was under an obligation to the financier, and the latter determined, by a skilful stroke, to put all that remained of his antipathy to flight.

It had been somewhat of a shock to Nestor Roche, when he heard that his young ally had gone out to fight, with the slippery stock-jobber for his second; and though, upon Horace rushing into the

prison-room a couple of hours after the duel, the joy at beholding him safe was such as, for the moment, to dispel all other pre-occupations. yet by and by, when the old editor had had time to grow calm and gruff again, he said, with a shade of pain, "I could have wished to see you with a worthier henchman on the field, my boy."

"I could have wished to have had you," replied Horace, gravely; "but I owe a debt to M. Macrobe."

And he proceeded to relate what had occurred, being backed in his narrative by Jean Kerjou, who spoke of the financier as having behaved throughout "like a trump." This did not convert Nestor Roche, but it appeased him, though soon his brow grew dark again, when Horace said, a little timidly, "And, do you know, I have a message from this very M. Macrobe to you, M. Roche?"

"To me!" exclaimed the editor, impassively.

"Well, yes. This morning, after the duel, M. Kerjou, here present, and I breakfasted with him, and he fell to talking about the libel-trial. He was very frank, but full of tact about it. He said we must not bear him a grudge for having defended his good name, but that he sought to make no profit out of the action, and that he hoped you would take back the five and twenty thousand francs damages the court had made you pay."

Here Horace drew out a pocket-book.

Nestor Roche frowned.

"You needn't offer me that man's money. If he is lucky enough to persuade you that he is an injured man, I have nothing to say; but you know my opinion of him. I've not changed it."

"Yet it seems to me this should induce us to mitigate our judgment," observed Horace, sticking up for the man who had stood by him. "After all, I daresay he's no worse than thousands of others we call honest men; and here he has sent you back your twenty-five thousand francs, which is a great deal more than many others would have done."

Nestor Roche eyed him rather compassionately, and answered with dryness:—

"My boy, men will always get the weather-side of you with smooth tongues. Think well of this stock-jobber if you like, but take him back his money."

And he would not hear a word more on the subject.

Horace felt hurt at this shortness, and so did Jean Kerjou a little, for it did not suit this straightforward Breton to suppose that he had been shaking hands with a man who had any taint on him. He said so frankly, and was putting it with some

earnestness to Nestor Roche whether the latter had any thing definite to allege against the banker Macrobe, when Max Delormay, the editor Tirecruchon, and a number of other political captives, tumbled in, attracted by the report of Horace Gerold's presence.

Much hand-shaking ensued, as well as congratulations on the issue of the duel; but of pity for the fallen man not a word. To be sure, M. de Cosaque was not a personage in whose favor one could get up much sympathy. He had been as a Goliath in the midst of his party, overshadowing his foes with his shoulder-of-mutton fist, slapping their faces on slender pretexts, and transfixing them afterwards without remorse. To have wished him alive would have been to wish an ever-threatening foil over one's head.

"A more bloodthirsty dog I never set eyes on," ejaculated the fat M. de Tirecruchon, with a sigh of relief. "Egad! he had me out once. Happily, it was with pistols, but he blew half the rim of my hat away."

"*De mortuis*" — began honest Jean Kerjou. He had not yet got over the tragic episode of the morning.

Soon the room was hazy with tobacco-smoke, and a dozen prisoners lay or sat recumbent on sofa, arm-chairs, and ottoman; Horace forming the centre of the group, seated on a low stool, and being made much of by the rest. Still a little sore at Nestor Roche's strictures upon M. Macrobe, he was rather moody and silent, and hoped the financier and his offer would be allowed to drop for a while, until he could be alone with Nestor Roche, and talk the point over with him. But Jean Kerjou, who was uneasy, and wanted to get his mind clear, made haste to resume his interrupted appeal to the editor, and so drew on a general discussion concerning M. Macrobe's proposal to refund the damages. The case was quite a novel one, and tolerably difficult to pronounce upon impartially. Opinions were pretty equally divided.

M. de Tirecruchon, who was nothing if not indulgent of everybody's foibles, his own included, held stoutly with the Macrobian.

"Corbleu!" he exclaimed, rolling one of his flat *panatellas* between two thick fingers, and glancing at his editorial brother with surprise — "Corbleu! Roche, you're not going to refuse such an offer as that? Of course Macrobe is more or less of a rogue, but aren't we all rogues, present company excepted? I wouldn't give a fig for a man who wasn't something of a rogue. Besides, don't you see that the more you've got to

say against the man, so much the greater is the reason for taking his money? If what you said against him was true, *ergo*, it was no slander: consequently, the damages were unjustly assessed, and, therefore, obviously, you have a right to re-pocket them."

Horace bridled up.

"I didn't wish to see the matter viewed in that light; I would rather the offer were accepted generously, as it was made, and that we should acknowledge, some of us, that we may have been a little hasty in judging M. Macrobe."

"Yes, so should I," assented Jean Kerjou, candidly; "or, at least," added he, "I should like to hear something plain and provable against this man."

M. Max Delormay here felt it due to himself to protest energetically. The famous paragraph he had written against M. Macrobe, and for which he, as well as others, were suffering fines and imprisonment, had gradually come to assume in his eyes the proportion of an historical event. He was not very remote from the idea that since this paragraph the financier had become somehow his own peculiar private property, and that to speak of him in any way, either *pro* or *con*, without his, Max Delormay's, sanction, was to defraud him, Max Delormay, of his just privileges. Accordingly, he claimed his right to protest, and, in that sober tone which Frenchmen have when they don't know what they are saying, made a speech which nobody understood, he least of all; but which concluded with a panegyric of the Spartan Republic, as being a place where commercial morality flourished.

M. de Tirecruchon puffed his jovial face with an air of bewilderment, and cried: "Tut, Max, you're running off with the wrong bone. The question is, whether Roche shall accept back 25,000 francs paid by him as damages for an article you wrote. I say yes; and I've given you my reasons. As for morality nowadays, I'll tell you what it just amounts to — not being found out. Go you into the streets, and take at haphazard out of our church-folk, politicians, tradesmen, or out of us journalists, any hundred men, and I will be bound there are not two out of the lot whose lives will bear looking into with a microscope. Hang it all! let us not get to prying too closely behind each other's curtains. I don't know who this Macrobe is. In times past he may have been a coiner, for all I can tell; but at present the Government accepts him, the Law accepts him, and Society accepts him, so why shouldn't I? For come! what would it profit me, if, after making the acquaintance of the man, finding him pleasant, sensible, ready to do

one a good turn, &c., I were to go and rake up the diary of his life, to see if I could discover one soiled page in it? To-morrow the fellow might die; and what should I have gained by my trouble then? — not even the pleasure of cutting him. Much better seek to know nothing about the soiled page, and take the fellow's hand so long as I find it agreeable. Of course if I receive proof positive that the fellow is a cur, that's another question; but I haven't."

A small, dark man, squatting near the fire and smoking a clay pipe, whom Horace knew as the Citizen Albi, a political conspirator, who unaffectedly admired Robespierre, and was of opinion that the Reign of Terror had failed in its effects from not being quite stringent enough, here broke in vehemently:

"Your views are as immoral as they well can be. If adopted they would be the charter of successful rogues. When you are hiring a servant you rake up all you can about him, and if you find a speck you draw back. I see no difference between rich rogues and poor. I have never yet given my hand to a man whose life was not as clear to me as the noon-day, and, so help me my own contempt for scoundrels, I never will."

"And what is the result, my poor Albi?" rejoined the stout editor, unruffled. "Why, ever since you could hold a musket you have been in open war with Society. Out of your short life of thirty years, you have spent eight in transportations or imprisonments; and I dare say, if I could read in your heart, I should find smouldering there the scheme of some new communistical era of guillotining, by which you hope to regenerate us. Those are gloomy principles, my poor friend, which make you thirst for our blood so ardently, and oblige Society in its own defence to make you pine away the best years of your young life behind prison bars."

"I do not see that I am to be pitied," answered Albi, in the same energetic tone as before. "Every man has his ambition. That of some men is to fill a pocket with gold pieces, that of others to tie a piece of red silk round their necks; yours is, I believe, to sell more copies of your newspaper than your neighbor over the way. I have mine, too, which is to establish a Republic of honest men. I care not the price I pay."

"And what is your idea of an honest man?" inquired Horace, eying him with curiosity.

Albi took the pipe out of his mouth and looked at him hard.

"You Gerolds are honest men," he said, slowly; "your father is an honest man and a credit to human nature. Your brother

promises to be like him; and I trust you will, too. You have been so hitherto." And he laid a marked stress on that word *hitherto*.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### M. POCHEMOLLE'S REQUEST.

THERE was no more talk about the five and twenty thousand francs. The conspirator Albi's utterances had fallen upon the free and easy conversation like a blast of hot air, withering it up by the roots. M. de Tirecruchon lapsed silent; and, presently, two of the crop-haired inmates of the penal wing coming in to lay the luncheon-cloth, Horace Gerold and Jean Kerjou took their leave.

"Lucky dogs!" sighed the fat editor, accompanying them to the end of the passage. "Yet two months before I may taste fresh air with you." He shook Horace's hand warmly, but holding it an instant, said: "Listen, M. Gerold. You pull too strong an oar for the 'Sentinelle.' You're a man of independent views, and don't like running in grooves; as well harness a race-horse to a stone cart, as keep you on a Radical paper. Your six months will be over soon. Come to me, you will find no dogmatism, and I don't set up for lecturing my contributors as to the acquaintances they choose."

Horace colored at this innuendo. Truth to say, he felt humiliated by the rebuke of Nestor Roche, and by the covert warning implied in the last words of Albi. Time was when he might have submitted to be sermonized by the old Republican, whom he esteemed; but success had raised his spirit, and he resented the stiffness with which the overtures of M. Macrobe, as conveyed through him, had been repulsed. There was something quite unreasonable in this frame of mind; for Nestor Roche might surely be excused for not feeling gushingly towards the man who had put him into prison; but reason is not the forte of youth; and in his pique, Horace bethought him seriously that he had a grievance against his editor.

He said as much to Jean Kerjou as they left Sainte Pélagie; and emitted one or two bitter reflections as to the obstinacy of old Republicans.

Jean Kerjou, being a Breton, was a Legitimist, and a Catholic, and one who did not understand Republicans, nor quite realize what it was they wanted. His attachment to Horace had been formed on entirely

personal grounds; but as he himself wore amulets next his shirt, signed himself when he swore, and never mentioned the name of Henri V. without doffing his hat, it was a subject of wonder to him how any one of his birth and talent, could profess the opinions which Horace Gerold did. In a simple tone, and rather puzzled, he answered: "I can't quite make out your party; you don't seem to agree among you as we do."

"Are there no men in your party who set up for oracles?" asked Horace; the puritan sternness of Nestor Roche, and the caustic fervor of Albi, recurring to him and nettling him.

"Perhaps there may be, but I don't know them," replied the Breton, naively. "I am sure, though, we have none who lecture about morality as I've heard them do every time I have been in the company of Republicans. Why don't you join our paper?" he added. "Tirecruchon is a loose fish on the surface, but a good fellow underneath; and he sets us no tether, you know; our staff is like a winter soup, full of herbs of all colors; we have two or three of your hue, but we all get on together swimmingly as beans in a pot."

Similes were one of the strong points of Jean Kerjou; they garnished his eloquence as the small dice of garlic do the roast legs of mutton in the province which was his birthplace. Horace, however, made no answer; and soon they reached the Rue Ste. Geneviève, where the first person they met was the courtly M. Pochemolle, who fingered a long piece of stamped paper which he had just received from an individual with a blue bag.

"This is for you, M. Horace. Something about this morning's business, I'm afraid," he added, in a tone of condolence.

True enough. It was a summons to appear before the Public Prosecutor, on the charge of having wilfully killed and slain one Paul Panier, commonly called de Cosaque. M. Macrobe and Jean Kerjou were both included in the summons, for having unlawfully, and of malice prepense, aided and abetted the perpetration of that crime.

Horace had already seen the Pochemolles once that morning, for on his way to Ste. Pélagie, after breakfasting with M. Macrobe, he had stopped to shake hands with Emile and show Georgette, who had been in sickly suspense since daybreak, that he was safe. He now walked into the shop with Jean Kerjou, under pretence of reading his summons, and found Georgette still pale, but with a ray of happiness in her eyes. She had just come in from out of doors, and was drawing off some tiny gray kid gloves, much smaller and finer than the daughters of drapers usually wear. So at

least thought Jean Kerjou, who was observing her.

Madame Pochemolle was as gracious and smiling as it was her wont to be whenever M. Horace paid her a visit. M. Alcibiade Pochemolle, from sheer admiration at the sight of a man who had sent a fellow-being to his last account, allowed his ell-measure to drop. According to M. Alcibiade, the next best thing to having courage enough to kill a man one's self, was to behold some one who had performed such a deed. M. Alcibiade much regretted that he himself knew not how to fence. He was not ferocious; indeed, he was rather mild than otherwise; but he thought he should like to kill some other draper's son in fair combat.

Jean Kerjou, casting his eyes about the shop, which was fitted and wainscoted with the fine old oak of a century ago, lit upon the two famous prints showing the Rue Ste. Geneviève such as it existed in the reigns of Louis XIV., and Louis XV., and having ventured to admire these heirlooms, was soon led to discover the monarchical, aristocratical, and clerical proclivities of the Pochemolle household. The draper, his wife, and the journalist then fell into harmonious talk and regrets over those good times when kings had no legislatures to plague them, when there was a gibbet stationed permanently in front of Notre Dame, and when a tradesman of the Rue Ste. Geneviève would not so much as have eaten an egg on a Friday without leave from the Bishop of Paris. Horace followed Georgette into the little back parlor, where she went to take off her bonnet. The door remained open, but there was no reason why any words spoken there should be heard in the shop. Horace spoke low.

"You have been for a walk, Georgette?"

"No," she murmured; "it was not a walk."

"Where then?"

She looked at him with more tenderness than she was aware of in her glistening eyes:

"To church," she whispered.

"To church, Georgette! But this isn't Sunday."

"It's more than that to me," she replied, with a touching accent.

"And to what saint did you pray?"

A tear or two welled up into her eyes as she blushed and said, almost inaudibly: "Could I keep away from thanking the Virgin on the day when your life has run such dangers and been spared?"

There was so much delicate modesty in her manner of murmuring these words, and when she had uttered them the emotion that suffused her face, and the grace which

love lent to her demeanor, as she wavered between the fear of having said too much and the consciousness that all she might say would ill describe the tenth of what she felt—gave her such a charm that she looked to Horace more lovely and attractive than she had ever seemed before. He gazed on her with a sort of spell-bound and astonished admiration, as one contemplates a picture whose full beauties one had not at first suspected. But even as he was gazing the current of his thoughts was turned by a sudden reflection. A voice rose up within him and put the question, like a note of reproof:—Whither was all this tending, and what did he hope would be the result of the love which he was encouraging in this poor girl?

He was not flippant or profligate, and the question unsettled him. The finer feelings in his nature revolted at the thought of trifling with the affections of a woman—a child almost—who seemed to have given him her heart; and yet, except an illicit passion—seduction and its attendant ties—there was but one possible course open to him, and that was to let Georgette think that he intended marrying her; and to do so. He was not prepared for this last step; and as the conviction forced itself upon him that he was drifting into straits where no man ever yet steered right who did not arm himself with inflexible resolution, a cloud passed over his brow, and he bit his lips.

Their eyes met—hers candid and trustful, his restless and uncertain. Then he said to himself: “I must remove from this house, else there will be misfortune on us all.”

He rose abruptly, shook hands with Georgette without looking at her, muttered a few words about hoping soon to see her again, and passed through the shop, telling Jean Kerjou they would meet by and by, but that for the present he had letters to write. He hurried up stairs to his rooms, repeating to himself in a troubled frame of mind that he must go, and would explain why to Emile when the latter came home. But before he had reached his door he heard steps behind him, and the voice of M. Pochemolle hailed him with a petition for a minute's interview: “M. Horace, sir, if you could be so kind as to give me a moment of your time. I want to ask your advice.”

“Walk in,” answered Horace, absently.

When they were alone together—M. Pochemolle planted on a chair, and rubbing his ear to find a suitable exordium; Horace seated at his desk, expecting it was a legal opinion that was going to be asked of

him—the draper began: “It's about Georgette, sir.”

Horace started, and felt moisture bedewing his forehead.

“Yes, it's about my Georgette, sir,” continued M. Pochemolle, not noticing any thing. “If I might make so bold as to say so, M. Horace, I look upon you almost as an old friend now. You're a wiser man too than I am, notwithstanding your years, which comes of learning; and I want you to give me advice. To tell you the truth, sir, our Georgette has not been well of late; I told your honored brother, M. Emile, so the other day. She's grown thin and pale, and doesn't talk as she used to do, nor laugh, nor seem to care much for things: all of which signs have been alarming her mother and me. But you know how women are, sir, and I don't think my wife and I would be likely to agree about our child's ailment, nor about the remedy for it. I ascribe a good deal of it to study and book-reading” (Horace gave a sigh of relief), “which is very well for men,—at least, for gentlemen—but isn't worth a rush for women. My respected mother—God bless her!—never read in any book save her ledger and her breviary, and this didn't prevent her making a true wife and a fine woman of business. But in these times old customs are dying out, and nothing would serve my wife but to have our Georgette brought up at a convent, where they taught her to strum on the piano, and paint flowers, and tell straight off on her fingers' ends who was Pope of Rome five hundred years ago, which seems to me about as useless knowledge for a tradesman's daughter as well can be. However, it was no good my attempting to say any thing, for when I wanted our Georgette to be taught cooking, and book-keeping, and all that makes a useful housewife, her mother wouldn't hear of it. My wife, you see, is of the modern sort. She wants me to make haste and get rich, and outshine our neighbors, and be a finer man than my father was; and as for Georgette, she dresses her up in silk, and counts upon marrying her to some gentleman who'll be several cuts above us, and shut his door in our faces when we go and call upon our child. Now, that's all very well in its way, but in Georgette's own interest, M. Horace, I want to prevent it. Not that I should grudge my daughter a husband after her own fancy, if I thought she had set her heart upon any one, and I found the man was respectable and paid his bills punctually; but I don't think she has; and there's a youth I have in my mind who's in love with her, and a very thrifty, intelligent lad into the bargain, who'd be sure to make her happy, and I should like

to bring the two together." Horace took up a quill, and hacked it with a pen-knife.

"Who is this youth, M. Pochemolle?"

"Well, sir, he's a commercial traveller. He's not often in Paris, but when he does come he lodges up on the sixth floor above our heads, renting a room there all the year round. He's a cheerful young man, always ready — too ready some say — to crack his jokes, and has known our Georgette ever since they were both no higher than this chair."

"Indeed!" broke in Horace, rather dryly; "is it the gentleman I have met once or twice on the staircase, who wears a Scotch tartan waistcoat, with a brass chain over it, rattles pence in his pockets, and whistles the 'Marseillaise' every time he comes up stairs?"

"That's he, I daresay," assented M. Pochemolle thoughtfully; "though I've never heard him whistle the 'Marseillaise'; but his chain's gold, M. Horace, I assure you, and probably eighteen-carat, for he's very well off. His name's Filoselle; he's been travelling since he was twenty, getting five per cent profit on all his commissions, and he's now twenty-eight, which makes a good deal of money. If he marries our Georgette, as he hopes to do, he means to set up in business for himself with the savings he has laid by."

Horace closed his pen-knife with a snap.

"And in what way can I assist you, M. Pochemolle?" he inquired.

"Well, sir," responded the draper, too intent upon his own thoughts to remark aught unusual in the tone of his lodger, — "Well, sir, M. Filoselle is a great favorite with us all, on account of his amusing ways. I sometimes think he'd make a stuffed bird laugh, would that young man. Of a winter evening, when he's in Paris, he often comes in, and makes himself sociable, telling stories, and playing tricks with cards, and the like; and turning the things upside down; and my wife thinks well of him, I'm sure; but between that and accepting him as a husband for Georgette, it is a long way; and, as for Georgette herself, why, I fancy she looks upon him as an old playfellow, but nothing else: so that Filoselle feels in a fix, and last time he was here, he told me that he shouldn't like to touch upon the question with the women down stairs until I had put in a good word for him."

Here M. Pochemolle shrugged his shoulders, and continued, dolefully, "But my putting in a good word would be just about as much use as arguing with a deaf post. My wife is a good woman, and I don't say but that she and I have got on smoothly together; but there's no tackling her about

her daughter. On that point she's hoighty-toity, and as foolish as women are when they get any fixed idea into their heads. I think, though, M. Horace" (and here the honest draper became appealing), — "I think you might help us. My wife has a high opinion of you, which is only natural and properly respectful on her part, and supposing, for instance, one day you had dropped into the shop by hazard like, I was to set the talk rolling on commercial travellers, and you were to join in and say there wasn't a more honorable profession going, and that they earned a deal of money, and were quite on a level with gentlemen, I think, sir, that might settle it."

M. Pochemolle fixed his eyes interrogatively on Horace.

"And have you yourself this high opinion of commercial travellers?" asked the latter.

"Well, I've a good opinion of those who get on in the business," answered the draper. "My wife she's all for scented gentlemen — even when they've got nothing in their pockets, which is less seldom than one supposes. If she could, she'd make a gentleman of me. As it is, she talked me into doing what I'd never done in my life before — invest money in one of those giant new companies that are all full like a balloon to-day, and all squash like nothing to-morrow. Happily, it's the *Crédit Parisien*, which M. Macrobe tells me is as safe as the Bank of France — and there's no denying it pays up well, and the shares are rising like quicksilver; but, to speak my mind, M. Horace, I don't fancy those kind of things. It's always been a motto in our family to sell fairly, to be content with few customers, but good, and to look to small profits but safe; and the man I want for my son-in-law is a man who thinks like me as nearly as possible — as I believe Filoselle does. He's not a genius, maybe, though geniuses behind the counter seem to me as much out of place as whales in a fish-tank; but he's a shrewd fellow, who'll give his wife a good home never let himself be caught with chaff, and keep clear of the *Tribunal de Commerce*."

The two purple ears, which ornamented the sides of M. Pochemolle's head like the handles of a jug, deepened in hue as he concluded the panegyric of his prospective son-in-law, and looked at the young barrister for an answer.

Had Horace prayed for it he could not have lighted upon a better opportunity of bringing his as yet innocent, but dangerous *liaison* with Georgette to an end. Nevertheless (Oh consistency of human nature!) the idea of Georgette being married now caused him, of a sudden, unaccountable

vexation bordering on jealousy. He dismissed M. Pochemolle with a vague assurance that he would see about the matter, and do his best; and, when the good man had departed, happy with having obtained his powerful co-operation, he paced about his room, pondering how he might best thwart this intended marriage. Such is man where women are concerned — a being more capricious than woman herself.

Of course he did not acknowledge to himself of what nature were the feelings that prompted him to think as he was doing, for the human mind, in its queerest fits of selfishness, is ever ingenious at putting a color of honesty on its schemes. He argued with himself that Georgette was too good for this commercial traveller, who wore a tartan waistcoat, and looked like a snob; that he would be doing her a service in preventing her being tied for life to this man; that she was a refined, well-educated girl, who deserved a better fate, &c., &c. The Devil, who was close at hand, found him logic as much as he needed.

Whilst he was thus brooding peevishly, not very well pleased with himself, he strayed into his brother's room, and stopped, with his eyes fixed on the portrait of his and Emile's mother hanging over the mantle-piece.

Their mother was as a dim vision to both the brothers, for she had died when they were too young to miss the guiding spirit they were losing. Horace, however, being by three years the eldest, could remember more than Emile, and he would often gaze abstractedly at the portrait, trying to recall a living image from out of the faint pencilled features. He did so now; and the effect upon him was soothing and beneficial, as all thoughts of a loved and lost mother must be. Whilst he looked, the unworthy impulses within him seemed slowly to subside, then to melt. His better nature regained the mastery. He felt ashamed of having wavered even for a moment, and took the resolution there and then to do his duty. "I must not see Georgette again," he murmured; "and I had better do what her father wishes — put in a word for this tradesman."

"Ah! they told me you were at home," cried a voice behind him. "I've come to fetch you off to dinner. You know we've got things to talk about. We're going to be tried for manslaughter together."

And M. Macrobe, who had intruded himself noiselessly into the room, held out his hand.

Horace gave a start, but he shook the hand though it seemed to him that in doing so he was swearing friendship to a sort of black-coated Mephistopheles.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### M. MACROBE INSERTS THE THIN END OF THE WEDGE.

M. MACROBE's face was against him, but if you gave him half an hour to talk it away, and another half-hour to make you forget the suspicious stories you had heard concerning him, he was a pleasant companion. He took Horace to dine at his own house in the Avenue des Champs Elysées: not a formal repast with guests eying one another ceremoniously over white neck-ties, but what he called a quiet dinner *sans façon*, to which he had invited a few nice fellows, and at which there were no ladies present. Our young friend was a little surprised at the luxury of the banker's residence, to which he had as yet seen nothing comparable, not even in the one or two lordly mansions of the Faubourg St. Germain where it had been his fate to visit. Every thing, from the glossy livery of the porter, who swung open the gilt bronze gates as they drove up, down to the cipher and crest engraved on the massive plate of the dinner-table, bore the impress of solid, although new-made wealth. It was not foolish wealth however, such as does not know where to bestow itself, and heaps around it vulgar and cumbersome splendor which dazzles without exciting admiration. M. Macrobe had seen too much of life not to have learned good taste. As he ushered his guest through a series of spacious and elegantly appointed saloons into a dining-room teeming with brilliancy and light, he flattered himself that if there were houses in Paris equal to his own, there were few superior, and he was not wrong.

The emotions of the day had been so numerous and varied that they had slightly unnerved Horace, and disposed him to accept any diversion as welcome. He was in that state of mind when friendliness comes as a balm, and slight attentions are received with a gratitude deeper, sometimes, than the occasion warrants. His duel of the morning — the gloomy horror of which was beginning to strike him with a dull force now that he was cool and could reason; — his unsatisfactory interview with Nestor Roche; the doubts that he could not altogether allay, as to the conduct he ought to have adopted and should adopt in the future towards Georgette; all these were harassing topics, which he was glad to dismiss for a while from his agitated brain. So the dinner was a relief to him, and therefore, from M. Macrobe's point of view, a success. That gentleman had indeed spared nothing to make it so. The viands were choice, the conversation agreeable, and the



guests all men famous in their respective walks, who treated Horace with a courteous deference which flattered him. Jean Kerjou was there, endowed with the excellent appetite that befitted his mediæval tastes, and, like his friend, not sorry to place the fumes of champagne between himself and the bloody scenes of the morning. The Breton journalist had a constitutional horror of bloodshed — which was the more remarkable as he himself had been out twice, and each time killed his man. But, perhaps, in his opinion this did not count, for he was a fiery Papist, and the two brother-journalists he had slain were only Voltairians.

The other guests were: Baron Margauld the banker, husband to the Madame de Margauld Horace had already met in society — a grave emphatic man, suspected of Orleanism, but respected by the Government on account of his solid credit and his unaffected detestation of Radicals: M. Arsène Gousset, a sparkling novelist, in great favor at court, and nightly popular with women, though he passed his time in railing bitterly at the former and inditing cutting satires upon the latter; and the Prince of Arcola, descended from one of the first Napoleon's Field-Mmarshals — a young gentleman of eight and twenty, with a very grand air and high tone, tempered, however, with a good-humored listlessness, which generally rose to the surface, once the ice of formalism was broken. This, with the eminent surgeon who had attended the combat in the morning, made seven who sat down to table. But presently, when the soup had been removed, and two giants were handing round turbot and salmon-trout, entered, like a rush of wind, Mr. Drydust, the celebrated correspondent of a London penny paper, who, with florid grace, excused himself for being late, on the ground that he had just been having an interview with the Minister of State. It was the peculiarity and good fortune of Mr. Drydust that he was always having interviews with Cabinet Ministers.

As the duel had created a considerable sensation, and was for the nonce the one subject of gossip about town, it was unavoidable that some allusion should be made to it, and that Horace should receive the congratulations which are customary under such circumstances. Mr. Drydust, especially, seemed to know more about the occurrence than the parties themselves. He had written a full-length and erroneous account of it to his paper that afternoon, and on learning that he actually had opposite to him the man who had rid Paris of the dreaded M. de Cosaque, he proceeded, somewhat to the dismay of M. Macrobe, to rattle off with immense volubility, and in first-rate

French, the names of all the illustrious persons of his acquaintance who had fought duels — winding up with the case of two distinguished British nobles who had wished to exterminate one another on Calais sands, but had been happily prevented by his timely interference. Horace listened with a rather embarrassed air; and Jean Kerjou furtively made the sign of the cross, in obedience to the superstition which holds it unlucky to speak of slaughter at table. But Mr. Drydust soon turned his attention to other themes. He apostrophized the Prince of Arcola:

"Prince, I was at Chantilly the day before yesterday, and saw your filly, 'Mogador,' do her canter. Take my advice and back her in preference to her stable-companion, 'Namouna,' for the *Prix de Diane*. I was talking about it to Lagrange; he thinks she'll win."

"Ah!" said the Prince, languidly, "I thought Count de Lagrange had got a filly of his own in the race."

"So he has; but I told him it wasn't worth a stiver. Lord Martingale was of the same opinion."

"Why, what has come over the filly then? Last week Lord Martingale backed her against my stable at five to one."

The Prince of Arcola had two passions: horse-racing and nobility. On the first he spent two-thirds of his income, which was large; on the second he lavished what spare time he had, reading books of heraldry and chivalrous chronicles. It was a most sore point with him that his title dated no farther back than half a century, and had been conferred, in a batch, by a Napoleon. He would have bartered it with all his heart, high-sounding as it was, for a simple barony of mediæval creation; and when M. Macrobe whispered to him, in introducing Horace Gerold, that this was the young barrister who might call himself Marquis of Clairefontaine if he chose, he eyed Horace much as one contemplates a phenomenon, and soon set the conversation going on, the Castle of Hautbourg, which he appeared to know from roof to basement, furniture included, as if he had been residing there for the last twelvemonth. He had a way of talking, when launched on his favorite topics, which lacked neither fire nor grace; and Horace followed him with a secret and altogether new interest as he dilated with enthusiasm on the broad acres, gray towers, old pictures, arms and sculptured halls of Hautbourg. "One of the finest domains I know," said he, "in this or any other country. Do you often go down there for shooting?" he added: and this question breaking the spell, Horace answered, a little dryly, that he never went there at all. Whereat

the Prince stared, and by and by observed with a sigh: "Political conviction must be very strong, M. Gerold, to make one renounce such treasures. I couldn't do it."

Mr. Drydust, who was patronizing the banker Margauld, giving him information as to scrip and share, current quotations, and the prospects of the new Irrawaddi loan, here cut in. He had caught the word "shooting," and immediately started upon a description of the great estates with which he was familiar—Windsor Castle, Knowsley, Chatsworth, Stowe, Eaton Court, &c.: all places where, by his own account, he was wont to go and divert himself with a few weeks' sport when he had nothing better to do. His rapid sketches were so vivid and well-colored that M. Arsène Gousset, deferring modestly to him as a superior genius, remarked how much democratic France was behind aristocratic England from the artist's point of view.

"With our code of equality and our parcelling of land," said he, "we have suppressed great wealth and pomp, and consequently, picturesqueness. Wishing to be all of a size, we have dragged the nobles off their high towers and forced them to stand shoulder to shoulder with us in a flat plain, where no man's head may rise above those of his fellows under pain of making the rest cry out. French society has become a landscape without hills, a sea without waves, a house without gables;—any thing you please that is dull and commonplace. It may be correct, but it is very ugly."

"Yet equality is one of the first conditions of progress," remarked the eminent surgeon; who, like most eminent surgeons, professed extreme liberalism, the more so at this moment, as he had expected to be made surgeon to the court, but been disappointed.

"Ah! progress," exclaimed the novelist, with a shrug, as he put down a glass of Tokay,—"progress, doctor, is a word coined by journalists and barristers, to signify that nowadays it is they who rule the roost. We have superseded the nobles, and given ourselves for a prey to the men who talk and the men who write, and we call that abolishing caste rule. They say merit has better chances than it used to have; but, pray, when was merit more respected than when low-born Froissart consorted on terms of equality with the proudest noblemen of France? When Rabelais, a witty curate, was the friend of Francis the First? When Charles the Ninth did homage in verse to Ronsard? And when Louis the Fourteenth himself, who would not have bared his head to an emperor, waited at table upon Molière? If we look past history through, we shall scarce find a man of any worth in art, politics, or science, who

was not petted, honored, and enriched by the great of his time. With all our boast of progress and equality, there is not a court in Europe that would receive a goldsmith as Benvenuto Cellini was received at the Court of France; there is not a potter of our day who could hope to win the distinctions that Bernard de Palissy earned. Charles the Fifth of France ennobled the man who set up the first clock; did we do as much for the man who invented photography? Gutenberg, it is true, led a struggling life, but was George Stephenson's path strewn with roses? and of the two, which, think you, were most to blame, the mediævals who were tardy to acknowledge the advantages of writing by machinery instead of by hand, or the moderns who, after recognizing what they term the benefits of railways, suffered the inventor to be laid in the earth without a single token of gratitude from the State? In politics, again, because we stock our cabinets with superannuated lawyers and jaded leader-writers, carefully excluding the rest of the world, we cry out that we have thrown open a broad career to talent, just as if our ancestors had not done so before us, and more liberally. What were Richelieu and Colbert but friendless men of middle-class estate, who, by mere dint of adroitness, acquired the patronage of powerful noblemen, by whom they were introduced and pushed forward at court? The fact is, any man with brains and pleasant manners could make his way in former times, and was not obliged to wait until his teeth were loose and his hair fell off, as seems to be indispensable in our day. A fellow of parts attached himself to the suite of a noble, became his patron's adviser, then his friend, was presented to the king, flattered him—and why not? I would as lief flatter a king to obtain a bunch of seals as a ragamuffin to catch a vote—and with a little patience and wit rose to be Prime Minister, like the two I have named; or High Chancellor, like L'Hôpital and Harlay; or Marshal of France, like Turenne and Catinat (who were the sons of small country gentlemen); or Bishop, like Bossuet and Fléchier,—the latter of whom was bred a tallow-chandler. The best of it was, too, that we took these men young, when their intellects were in their vigor: for progress had not yet made it a law that our statesmen should be old men stricken with the gout, and our generals aged cripples, with all the genius frozen out of them by rheumatism. Had they lived in our day, Richelieu would not have been, at thirty, a curate with fifty napoleons a year; Turenne a lieutenant, wondering whether he should ever be a major; and Colbert a government clerk in

the office of Mr. Drydust's friend, Monsieur Gribaud."

Mr. Drydust nodded assent. He thought the atmosphere of modern civilization stifling. Nevertheless, he was in favor of penny papers. All things considered, he should like to be living under Louis XI., with the cheap press flourishing as an institution.

But the novelist was averse to such a combination. He was not fond of the Press, and took no pains to conceal it. Cracking filberts composedly, and smiling within his well-trimmed yellow beard, he amused himself and the rest of the table by passing in review the Paris Press, and grimly bespattering the whole journalistic profession, without bitterness, but without mercy. He made an exception in favor of the "Sentinelle" and the "Gazette des Boulevards," out of respect for the two writers present; but he could not refrain from giving a side cuff to the editors of those journals, MM. de Tirecruchon and Roche: the former of whom he described as the most agreeable humbug he knew, and the latter as a vinegar-cruet—cold without and sour within. It was pleasure to watch the starched features of the Baron Margauld relax whilst this performance was going on. He, too, was no friend of the Press: "a dangerous, meddling institution," as he termed it.

His satisfaction bordered upon mirth when the novelist continued: "You are right to call the Press a power, for it is a power for destruction, like gunpowder or corrosive acid: but it has never built up any thing; and never will. Since daily newspapers have come among us, the word 'stability' has ceased to have any sense, and should disappear from the dictionary. Nothing is stable nowadays: neither thrones, nor constitutions, nor religions. A journalist is a man who devotes his time to finding out the weak points in human institutions, political or social, and hammering upon them continually until the whole structure falls to pieces. There is very little discrimination in his work: for with him it is not a question of being right or wrong, but of filling up three or six columns a week. If the times be fertile in large abuses, so much the wider his choice of subjects; but if the Government be an honest one, and there be only small abuses, he will assail these small abuses at just the same length, and with precisely the same vigor of invective, as the larger ones. Louis Philippe was attacked more severely than Charles X., and the republic of '48 more pitilessly than Louis Philippe. There is not a government on earth can bear up against the three-column system; heaven

itself couldn't stand it. If ever the millennium arrives, it will have to begin by gagging the Press, else in twenty years it will go the way of all other governments."

The banker Margauld bent his head and coughed, in token of enthusiastic concurrence. But the Prince of Arcola whispered, with a smile, to his neighbor: "I fancy M. Gousset is himself a victim of the three-column system. His last novel met with some rather rough handling, did it not?"

It was now time for coffee; and M. Macrobe rose to lead the way to his smoking-room—an apartment of sybaritic comfort and luxury, fitted up like an Arab tent, with Turkey carpets a foot thick, and low divans, into which the human form sank, stretched enjoyably at full length.

In the passage to this *buen-retiro* Mr. Drydust naturally contrived to push to the front once more as leader of the conversation,—the only post his coruscating genius brooked. Cigars, with curiously outlandish names, but of exquisite smell and savor, were produced from cedar-wood cases; the powdered gentlemen poured fragrant coffee, steaming hot, into cups small and transparent as egg-shells; and whilst the fumes of Mocha, blending with those of Havanna, were rising spirally towards the ceiling, the British journalist resumed his observations upon men and things, and the company were soon wrapped in the pyrotechnic blaze of that gentleman's utterances, which were always entertaining, sometimes even dazzling to his audience. The performance was not so engrossing, however, but that the Prince of Arcola, who was seated on the same ottoman as Horace, found occasion to strike up with the latter what the French call an exchange of good proceedings. He admired the modest young barrister. He paid him compliments with that insinuating and polished grace of which the French are such masters, asked him to breakfast at his house in the Rue Lafite—one of the largest and most hospitable in the Chaussée d'Antin—and ended by offering to propose him for election at the club of the Rue Royale.

"You should belong to a club," said he: "clubs are social menageries; one meets all the lions there. They are one of the many good things we have borrowed from the English, to whom we are indebted for pretty nearly every thing that makes existence tolerable."

"I shall be happy to second you," added Baron Margauld, whom Horace struck as a quiet, earnest young man, and worth weaning from Radicalism.

Horace thanked them, but declined; a Paris club and a London one are not quite the same things. In four cases out

of five, the former is little more than a sumptuous gambling-house in disguise; and of all the gambling-houses of the capital, the Cercle de la Rue Royale was the most celebrated, as well as the most splendid. The prince did not press his offer, but wondered a little that Horace should allege want of means as one of the reasons for declining it.

The court novelist volunteered on his side to introduce Gerold to some of the leading authors, and this proposal was accepted gratefully.

"I know most of the journalists," said Horace, "and I have seen Monsieur Hugo at Brussels; but I should feel it an honor to be acquainted with our other national glories—M. de Musset, M. Ponsard, M. Gautier, and M<sup>me</sup>. Sand." He added something gracious as a hint that he had perused all M. Arsène Goussset's works, and ranked him, too, amongst the national glories. The novelist was sensible to the homage, and, towards midnight, when Horace had retired with his friend, Jean Kerjou, after accepting the Prince of Arcola's invitation to breakfast, and making a luncheon appointment with M. Macrobe for the next day, that they might appear before the public prosecutor together, he exclaimed with some admiration, "Good blood will out. That young Gerold has the manners of a duke; he is serious, dignified, and absolutely unaffected. It is incomprehensible to me that he should elect to be a *sans-culotte*."

"He has fallen into bad hands," sighed M. Macrobe unctuously.

"Yes, but what makes him talk about the mediocrity of his means?" interposed the Prince of Arcola, with curiosity. "The Hautbourg estates are worth a million francs a year, if they are worth a centime. What do the Gerolds do with all their money?"

"Ah, there you put a question I should like to solve myself," replied M. Macrobe. "The Gerolds are millionaires, I know, but they live as if they were poor. The father has a small lodging on a fifth floor at Brussels; I had inquiries made there by our correspondent. The police think they spend their fortune on secret societies; but this is probably a guess."

"There would be no derogation in it," said the prince. "If a man of birth goes in for people's rights, he is quite right to do it grandly; and there would be something not unbecoming in young Gerold putting himself at the head of an occult social movement destined to revolutionize the country. After all, he would only be re-enacting the part the Montmorencys and the Colignys played when they took the

lead of the Huguenots, who were the Radicals of their time."

"For myself," chimed in the court novelist, composedly, "I should not be sorry if there were a good sanguinary break-out, like the Reign of Terror, only worse. I am convinced that if the Radicals were allowed their head for a few years, they would lead France such a gallop, that she would leap madly back into royalty, feudalism, and rabid popery to get rid of them. Then we should have a century or so of peace."

"God bless my soul! you are surely not speaking in earnest," cried out the banker Margauld in disgust. He had seen revolutions face to face, and thought them no themes for jocularly. Happily Mr. Drydust was by to re-assure him. According to this eminent person, the Second Empire was unshakable, having the sympathies of democratic England with it. These sympathies found expression in the penny sheet, to which Mr. Drydust contributed, and were enough to keep any throne stable to all eternity. "Besides," added he, "you may make your mind perfectly easy, baron, and you, too, M. Macrobe, for M. Gerold does not spend his money on secret societies. I will tell the Prefect of Police so next time I talk to him. I know the man who is the soul of all the French secret societies; it's that arch-revolutionist Albi; he's in prison now,—an intimate friend of mine—but a dark-minded character, who would no more agree with young Gerold, nor roost in the same nest with him, than a crow would with a starling." Then Mr. Drydust proceeded to explain how secret societies were organized; after which he speculated as to how the Gerolds spent their money; but eventually finding the problem insoluble, branched off into a disquisition upon "odd people," whose lives were a mystery to the community. M. Macrobe reiterated his regrets that Gerold had fallen into bad hands, and Mr. Drydust assented. He further engaged to bring him back by degrees to the right way, by giving him as much of his society as was compatible with his—Mr. Drydust's—other and multifarious occupations.

Meanwhile, the subject of these remarks, rolling homeward in a cab, was reflecting with satisfaction on the delicate, and even generous behavior of M. Macrobe; for, just as Horace was leaving, the financier had drawn him aside and said, "My dear young friend, I am not surprised at M. Roche having refused the twenty-five thousand francs; for, though honest, I fancy he is a little opinionated—isn't he?—and not quite exempt from narrow-mindedness. Such, at least, is the character he has always borne in the press, and, if you will

allow me to say so, I have heard it deplored that a man of your wonderful and shining abilities should be tied to the same wheel as a person so cramped in intellect. The money must now go to the poor, and here I should really esteem it a favor if you could recommend me any worthy persons on whom to bestow it. As a liberal writer, you are, probably, often besieged with applications from needy people, whose political opinions make it difficult for them to obtain relief through the usual channels. There must be numerous families of poor Republicans who took part in the affair of '48, and who would stand no chance of obtaining anything from the Municipal Bureaux de Bienfaisance: these are the very people I should like to assist. And now, as to this trial of ours, I suppose you are aware that, from a certain point of view, it is a less serious matter to kill one's adversary in a duel than to wound him. If you wound him, you are tried in the Correctional Court by three judges, without jury, and you are safe to be imprisoned; in the other case, you are arraigned at the Assizes before a jury, and are invariably acquitted. However, we shall have to prepare a defence of some sort, and so I have been thinking we could not do better than have one counsel for the three of us, and that counsel your own brother, whose abilities I hear so warmly eulogized. The trial will be sure to draw a great crowd, and will help him forward in his profession. I shall instruct my solicitor to offer him my brief, and I trust you will prevail upon him to accept it."

"It was thoughtful," mused Horace; "and it was gracious. The man is a gentleman, and it is a pity I ever joined in calumniating him."

## CHAPTER XV.

### HOW EMPIRES ARE GOVERNED.

On the morrow, at about the time when Horace Gerold, Jean Kerjou, and M. Macrobe were being minutely cross-questioned by the Public Prosecutor as to their motives for maliciously slaying an official journalist, his Excellency M. Gribaud, Minister of State, was holding audiences at his residence in the Louvre, and it was noticed by all whom applications for patronage, favors, or redress brought into contact with that great man, that his Excellency was not at all in a good humor that morning.

Towards mid-day M. Camille de Beau-

feuille, one of the Minister's secretaries, a grave diplomatic young gentleman of irreproachable attire, issued from his chief's presence, and remarked to a brother secretary in an ante-room: "The governor has turned out of bed the wrong side this morning."

"Ah!" exclaimed the other, with an intonation that betokened neither amazement nor great concern; and looking up from the "Moniteur" with which he was beguiling the tedium of business hours, he added: "Summer heat doesn't agree with the old fellow; he's been bitter as a weed this some time past."

"He has sent me out to take stock of the unfortunates who are kicking their heels about in the waiting-rooms," resumed M. de Beaufeuillet; and saying this, he touched a bell on the table.

An usher with a silver chain round his neck, appeared.

"Is the slate very full, Bernard?"

"Very, sir; I much fear his Excellency will have a heavy morning; there are above twenty people waiting." And at the bidding of the young man, the venerable Bernard recapitulated the names of all the persons in attendance—a goodly list, on which figured many ladies of beauty come to solicit distinctions for their husbands; many gentlemen devoid of beauty, but replete with ambition, come to beg honors for themselves; and a remnant of individuals whose errands were purely disinterested and undertaken only from a desire to serve the State. Amongst these last was our friend Mr. Drydust, who stated that his business was important.

"I think you had better show in the English journalist first," hazarded M. Camille. "I believe the Government considers him useful."

But at that moment entered a second usher, who said: "M. Louchard, the Commissary of Police has just arrived." An intimation which caused the secretary to vanish for a minute, and, on returning to say: "M. Louchard takes precedence of everybody. His Excellency will see him at once."

In another couple of minutes M. Louchard, the commissary, had been conducted deferentially through the ante-room, and was closeted in private with the Minister. The two secretaries pulled faces behind him when he had passed; but this M. Louchard did not notice.

His Excellency M. Gribaud was one of the bulwarks of the Second Empire. Formerly, he had been one of the bulwarks of the Republic, and indeed it was his mission, in a general way, to be the bulwark of every party that happened to be in the

ascendent. In appearance, he somewhat belied his Christian name of Augustus, for he was not august at all; but he had a curious penetrating eye, that partook of the vulture's and the money-lender's, and a tongue as pointed and insinuating as a gimlet. It was this tongue that had helped to make the fortune of M. Gribaud. Most people when speaking in public are apt to hesitate now and then to find the correct term; but not so M. Gribaud. Nobody had ever known him pause for a word. Correct or no, he spoke straight on with imperturbable assurance, and the policy he pursued in elocution he followed, also, in all the aims of his life, never allowing himself to be impeded by a scruple, nor balked by a regard for others. Such a man was sure to succeed. He was just the Minister to ride rough-shod over opposition, for there was no silencing him, and he was not in the least particular as to his choice of argumentative weapons. If pressed close by the logic of an adversary, he quietly called him a liar. One of his greatest oratorical triumphs had been obtained by accusing an honorable political opponent of being sold to a foreign government. He had no proofs to support the charge, but neither had his antagonist any to refute it; and, in such cases, it is always the more worthy of the contending parties — i.e., the man in office — who is believed. The charge almost broke the heart of the political opponent, but it greatly added to the credit of M. Gribaud, who came to be looked upon in Imperialist circles as a debater of no ordinary value.

When the Commissary of Police entered, M. Gribaud was seated at his desk, dressed in black clothes too large for him, and a stiff white cravat, that gave him the appearance of an unusually ferocious Dissenting minister. With a thick, knotty hand he was holding up a pair of double eyeglasses, through which he scrutinized, narrowly and frowningly, a despatch from a prefect. At sight of M. Louchard he wasted no time in vain courtesies, but cried out, "I can't make out what your agents are about, M. Louchard. They never tell one anything. All the information I get as to passing events comes from private sources. Two Roman Republicans spent the day before yesterday in Paris, and you were quite ignorant of the fact; yet your orders are to keep the closest watch upon every Italian who sets foot in the city."

"I am sure they did not put up at any hotel, your Excellency," pleaded M. Louchard, humbly but firmly, "else I should have known it, and sent you a report."

"They came by the mail-train from England, and returned the same night. Your

detectives at the railway terminus should have recognized them for Italians, and followed them. Had they been bent upon assassinating any of us, they might have done it with complete security. But that is not all. Why have I had no report about the three medical students who hissed a loyal song at a music-hall last Monday night? nor about M. Giroux-Ette, my predecessor in office, and a senator, who, on Tuesday, conversed amicably for a whole hour in a public place, with the radical barrister, Claude Febvre? nor about Madame de Masseline, the wife of an official deputy who spoke slightly of me at one of her dinner-parties? Why have I been apprised of none of these circumstances? The police are growing either blind or careless, M. Louchard."

"Not blind or careless, your Excellency," protested M. Louchard with meekness; "but the police have a great deal to do, and it is difficult for them to be everywhere at once."

"What is the use of them, then?" retorted the Minister, roughly. "It is the business of the police to have their eyes everywhere. We don't stint you with money. You should see into every house as if its walls were of glass."

"We do our best," muttered M. Louchard. "There are few houses of consequence where we have not one or two emissaries on the visiting list. Madame de Masseline herself is most zealous in conveying information as to all she hears, and I am certain that if she allows herself to speak disparagingly of your Excellency, it was rather for the purpose of sounding her guests than to emit any opinion of her own."

"Humph!" murmured his Excellency, who appeared less certain than the police official. "I did not know Madame de Masseline was on your books, M. Louchard. If I were you I would rely as little as possible on women; their information is seldom accurate, and there is generally some woman's quarrel or jealous pique at the bottom of their denunciations. I have noticed they never tell tales of a man who has a good figure and curly hair, unless they have been jilted by him. But enough of this. What have you got to tell me this morning?"

"I have come about this Gerold affair — this duel," began M. Louchard. "I thought your Excellency might have some orders to give me."

"A pretty piece of work that duel," grumbled the Minister, his brow darkening. "You suffered this pestilent young Radical to kill one of our most serviceable writers; yet you had several hours' notice of the duel, and might easily have stopped it."

"I counted that matters would turn out

differently. I imagined M. de Cosaque would kill M. Gerold," observed the commissary, naively.

"You don't seem very lucky in your calculation," was the Minister's dry answer; but he passed lightly over the subject, for he too had known of the duel beforehand, and if he had not thought expedient to stop it, there is a presumption that some such motive lay uppermost in his mind as had actuated M. Louchard. He remained silent a moment, stroking his short pointed chin with his hard hand, and peering with a brooding expression at the commissary. Perhaps during that moment he recalled the time when the two young Gerolds were bright boys, whom he used to go and see at school, and when their father was a friend whom he honored and by whom he was esteemed. Those were far-off days, and probably the remembrance of them was not over-pleasant: for M. Gribaud broke out morosely, "Look here, M. Louchard; I've had enough of this M. Horace Gerold. Things were going on very well before he turned up; the Opposition were almost silent; but now it looks as if the old nonsense were coming back. This young Gerold is becoming a power. People talk about him in society; he has all the women on his side; in a word, he is dangerous. It is time you saw to him. That was a very suspicious document you showed me some time ago—I mean that deed of gift. If those two youths are already possessors of the Hautbourg estate, they are millionnaires, and their leading the bread-and-water life they do is a queer circumstance that has a strong smell of conspiracy about it. You must have a close surveillance set upon both the brothers; they must not be lost sight of a minute; you must ascertain what they do, where they go whom they see; their letters must be opened at the post-office, and if you discover that they habitually frequent or correspond with men of extreme opinions, there will be enough in that to furnish a handle to the Public Prosecutor. At all events—and I hope you understand me, M. Louchard—M. Horace Gerold must be got rid of; we must frighten him into running back to Belgium, and if he won't go, why" (M. Gribaud threw a significant glance at the commissary)—"why I dare say it won't be very difficult to send him where tougher men than he have gone—on a forced voyage to Cayenne."

Accustomed as M. Louchard was to the mention of Cayenne and Lambessa as fitting places of resort for Liberals, and animated as he moreover was, against Horace Gerold by the recollection of how the latter had treated him on the occasion of the domiciliary visit, he felt a creeping sensa-

tion in the back at the grim coolness of the Minister's tone. M. Gribaud, indeed, made no more bones about removing an enemy from his path than about filipping a speck of dust off his coat. The commissary answered with his usual abject deference, "It shall be done as your Excellency wishes." Then he twirled his hat for a few moments between his fingers, as if doubtful whether to proceed with certain other communications he had intended making, until, finally, a thought seemed to strike him, and he said:—"If your Excellency will allow me to express an opinion, I think M. Horace Gerold, though dangerous, may turn out to be less so than his brother. My men have had their eyes on both for some time, and M. Emile is the one who appears to me the most vicious. He never goes into society nor to the theatre; he works very hard; he has few friends, and those all of the worst sort—hardened Republicans; he distributes a great deal of money amongst the poor, and visits them at their own houses; he also lends them books, which I take to be a mischievous symptom; for the poor who read become unmanageable. M. Horace, I am bound to say, is just the contrary. He mixes a good deal with everybody, and just now he has got into good hands—those of M. Macrobe, the banker, your Excellency. If your Excellency would have very precise information as to M. Horace Gerold's sayings and doings, there is not a better man to apply to than M. Macrobe. He had M. Gerold to dinner with him last night; and being a most loyal Imperialist, deeply attached to your Excellency, I can vouch that he would completely enter into your views with regard to watching the young man and reporting all he saw."

A belief in M. Macrobe—that is, in the man whose financial science was so profound, and whose hints were such a god-send to those on whom he deigned to bestow them—was one of the articles of M. Louchard's creed. He therefore turned completely sallow when in a short tone M. Gribaud replied:—"M. Macrobe is coming here presently, and possibly I may have to give you some instructions concerning him, M. Louchard. I have sent for him to explain his conduct in overtly taking part against a Government writer in a public restaurant, and in assisting this M. Gerold as second. M. Macrobe is a gentleman who had best mind his p's and q's. He has been tolerated because he was useful; but if he thinks himself strong enough to indulge in vagaries, he must be shown he is mistaken."

M. Louchard dug his right hand deep into one of the hind pockets of his coat,

and drew from it a yellow bandanna handkerchief, of which he proceeded to make a sudden and noisy use. Had any of the familiars of the commissary been present, they would have recognized in this behavior the infallible portent of extreme bewilderment, such as could only have arisen from the violence of internal emotion. M. Louchard, indeed, would as soon have expected to hear M. Gribaud attack his Majesty the Emperor as the powerful Director of the *Crédit Parisien*. M. Gribaud, who could not be supposed to know this, added sharply: "Have you any thing further to say, M. Louchard? time is scarce and I've none to waste."

"I—I—had one or two other observations to suggest," stammered M. Louchard, making an effort to rally; "but another occasion will do—when your Excellency is less engaged."

"I am not likely to be less engaged until I am out of office," rejoined the Minister with dryness. "If you have any thing to say, out with it at once."

Just then there was a knock, and the venerable Bernard glided into the room. He whispered a few words to the statesman, and withdrew.

"Here is M. Macrobe just come," remarked the latter, addressing M. Louchard. "So make haste, please."

Perhaps it was the timely reflection that after all, M. Macrobe was very well able to take care of himself, and would, in all probability, not fail to do so when necessary, or perhaps it was simply the long-acquired habit of never letting himself be long troubled by a care about others, that caused M. Louchard abruptly to shake off his momentary stupefaction, and to discharge in a business-like manner the remainder of the errand on which he had come.

"I desire to recommend to your Excellency's indulgence, a journalist at present undergoing imprisonment," said he. "It is M. de Tirecruchon, the editor of the '*Gazette des Boulevards*.'"

"I know him well," responded his Excellency; "as troublesome a scribbler as any in France. His paper is always turning me into ridicule."

"He is certainly troublesome," assented M. Louchard. "But he often rendered us small services, and would do more if coaxed and humored a little. He is not a penman who could be bought with cash, like several other of the Opposition writers in our pay; but small favors would go a long way with him; they would be a profitable investment."

"Humph!" grumbled his Excellency.

"Besides," insinuated the commissary, "he has already been in prison some time,

and we should only be remitting two months of his sentence. Your Excellency knows the '*Gazette des Boulevards*' is a paper with which it is politic, so far as is possible, to keep on good terms. Everybody reads it, and, though professing to be independent, it gives us valuable assistance in discrediting the Republicans, whom it jeers at, and unmasks most praiseworthy. Since its editor has been in prison, however, it has been dead against us, and most biting in its sarcasms. I think if we were to free M. de Tirecruchon, and offer him some small facilities in the way of sale, such as allowing his paper to be sent into the provinces by the parcels-delivery, which would give him a start of the other journals, who are obliged to send theirs by post, we should find ourselves the better for it."

"Well, well, I'll see," growled the great M. Gribaud. "I don't like your M. de Tirecruchon. He's one of your confounded, sneering Parisians who respect nothing and nobody. I don't see that he can be better than where he is, and I wish we had all the other journalists in Paris under the same lock with him, and could keep them there to all eternity—that I do. But I tell you what, M. Louchard: If we release this man and throw him a bone, it must be an understood thing that his paper leaves off poking fun at me. It may laugh at my colleagues if it pleases—it's not my business to defend them—but it must respect me—and—and the Emperor," added M. Gribaud, after a moment's pause. "Do you understand, M. Louchard? If it doesn't, mind you, I'll make it unpleasant for M. de Tirecruchon. Is that all you have got to say?"

"I wished to speak to your Excellency about Monsieur Drydust," rejoined the commissary.

"Ah! Monsieur Drydust," echoed the Minister whose countenance at once changed and lost its stiffness. "We must be civil to him, M. Louchard. He is an ally. He writes in a paper read by a hundred thousand English shopkeepers, who'll believe what he tells them, as if it were in the Bible. We send him invitations to all the ministerial parties, and he inserts every thing we ask him. Such a man must be encouraged. If he makes any request of you, that is, within the bounds of feasibility, you must accede to it."

"He often comes to the Prefecture for information," answered M. Louchard; "and so I've been thinking we could serve him and ourselves at the same time, by furnishing him with a daily bulletin, summarizing all the intelligence the Government might desire to see propagated. We would have this bulletin drawn up in English by one of our British employés, who would add such



comments as we dictated to him. Gradually, Monsieur Drydust would find it the shortest way to forward our bulletin, purely and simply, to his paper; so that it will be like having a daily column in that journal at our disposal. One can insert a great deal in a column," added M. Louchard, by way of parenthesis.

M. Gribaud never fell into the bad habit of praising his subalterns, but, with a keen glance, he nodded approval.

"That reminds me I've Monsieur Drydust waiting in an ante-room all this while," said he. "Look in upon him as you go out, M. Louchard. Tell him that you will have a packet of special information ready for him every day. Mind you say *special information*. And, stay, I am so busy this morning I am really afraid I sha'n't have time to talk to him. Put him off politely — very politely; and give him some bit of confidential news. What shall it be? — Ay, this will do — and it's a good idea: Hint to him that you are on the scent of a conspiracy against the Emperor's life; mention it mysteriously, and he will be sure to make it public. Designate the chiefs of the Republican party as implicated; hint clearly at M. Horace Gerold, though don't specify him by name. Monsieur Drydust's imagination will do the rest, and his remarks will prepare the public mind, should we decide upon arresting and indicting these two Gerolds. Do that adroitly, M. Louchard; and now, good morning."

The commissary made a respectful obeisance, his eyes quavering, half with admiration, half with awe at the subtle spirit of the politician facing him. Then, his business being over, he departed.

It was now the turn of the other postulants. A few days before, on learning that M. Macrobe, of the *Crédit Parisien*, was in attendance, M. Gribaud would have had him introduced without a moment's delay. M. Macrobe was in favor then; but the part taken by him in the duel had entirely reversed the good dispositions of M. Gribaud — who, to mark his displeasure, resolved to let the financier wait until the whole list of visitors was exhausted — that is, possibly two hours. And no doubt he would have done so but for a circumstance altogether without precedent in ante-chamber annals; for scarcely had M. Louchard retired, than the venerable Bernard entered, and, with the look of a man hopelessly flustered by the audacity of the message he is commissioned to deliver, said: "Your Excellency, M. Macrobe has desired me to say that, having numerous calls on his time this day, he would be thankful if your Excellency could either see him immediately, or grant him an audi-

ence for some appointed hour on another day."

The venerable Bernard stood still, expecting, but prepared for a thunderclap.

The great M. Gribaud answered calmly: "Show him in."

M. Macrobe was ushered in. He was attired in the black kid-gloves which constituted his gala costume; his brass-clasped note-book was peeping out of his breast-pocket; and at his button-hole glared, scarlet as a poppy, the ribbon of his Order. He was collected and impenetrable.

With perfect composure he made his bow, and, in a tone that struck surprise into the Minister, from its firmness, said: "Your Excellency must excuse me: my hours are not my own, but my shareholders'. Time was when I could have afforded to wait two hours in an ante-room, but this is so no longer."

There was something very significant in this phrase. Thought the Minister to himself: "If this man is so impertinent, it is that he feels himself strong, and has allies with him more powerful than myself. Don't let us commit any blunder." And, like a prudent statesman as he was, instead of apostrophizing the financier in the hectoring tone he would certainly have adopted had the latter displayed any humility, he began quietly: "I desired to see you, M. Macrobe, to ask whether I had not been misinformed respecting the part you are said to have taken in the fatal duel of yesterday. It cannot surely be true that you, a man of order — a man on whom we rely — openly sided with a dangerous Democrat against a gentleman known to be a trusted partisan of ours?"

"I sided with M. Gerold because he was my friend," responded M. Macrobe calmly. "As for M. de Cosaque, or Panier, I am sorry he was a trusted partisan of your Excellency's, for it seems to me that the fewer of such hangers-on a respectable government tolerates, the better for its reputation in the eyes of honest people."

M. Gribaud's blood rose to his face, and he was on the point of giving a rough rejoinder; but, at the sight of M. Macrobe's impassive countenance, he controlled himself, and answered between his teeth: "I did not say a trusted partisan of *mine*, but of *ours*, by which I mean of the Government's and the Emperor's. You will probably allow that if his Majesty set store by M. de Cosaque, he had his reasons."

"I think we shall do better, perhaps, to come to an understanding, your Excellency," replied M. Macrobe, fixing his sharp eyes on the Minister's. "Whether his Majesty set store or not by M. de Cosaque, I am unaware; but in any case par-

tisans of M. de Cosaque's kidney are not scarce in the market: the Government can find as many of them as it pleases by offering them their price. There are other men, however, whose support it is not so easy to obtain — men of talent, rank, means, and popularity, whose co-operation would be an element of strength to the Government. I presume your Excellency would not object if I enlisted such a recruit as that for our ranks?"

"To whom are you alluding?" inquired the Minister, wondering, but still sullen.

"Your Excellency has doubtless heard that M. Horace Gerold, whom you have termed a dangerous Democrat, is heir to the ancient dukedom of Hautbourg, to a splendid estate conferring immense territorial influence, and to a moneyed fortune, which, by all accounts, must be considerable. M. Gerold is, besides, a man of talent, much esteemed by his party, and a little dreaded, if I mistake not, in Imperialist circles. What would your Excellency say if I brought this young man completely over to our party, if I induced him to assume his title, and to put both his landed influence and his own personal talents at the service of the Second Empire?"

It was now the turn of M. Gribaud to fix his eyes on his interlocutor.

"You think you shall be able to manage that, M. Macrobe?" he asked.

"I promise nothing," replied the financier; "but if the Government does not thwart me by heaping petty vexations on M. Gerold, I am confident of success."

"And you will bring Manuel Gerold and young Emile Gerold over too?" continued the Minister with a keen look.

"I cannot vouch for the younger brother: and to bring Manuel Gerold over would be impossible," answered M. Macrobe; "but Manuel Gerold is an old man, and in the course of nature must soon die. As to Emile Gerold, he is obstinate; but he will cease to be dangerous when his brother is with us — his party will never trust him."

"And of course for doing this you will require a reward?" observed the Minister, with more pungency than good taste.

"Naturally," rejoined the financier, with something of a sneer at the simplicity of the remark. "But I will ask for my reward at the fitting time and place." For the present, all I have to beg is, that your Excellency will see that M. Gerold is spared those flea-bite annoyances which will be likely to sour him without doing the Government any good — I mean domiciliary visits, frivolous prosecutions, personal attacks in the semi-official press, and such like. Then again, I would make so bold as to request that judicial authorities be enjoined to

evince more civility than they do at present. We have been before the Public Prosecutor this morning, and I assure your Excellency his tone was such as I was obliged to resent. He talked of the duel as a murder, which was at once ill-bred and unwise. A little civility never does any harm. It is a good saying that more flies have been caught with honey than with vinegar."

"Well, hark you, M. Macrobe," returned M. Gribaud, in the quick, matter-of-fact tone which was habitual to that statesman when he was striking a bargain with a person whose head he perceived to be as long as his own — "if you are working to bring young Gerold over to us, you shall not be meddled with — I promise you that much. Only, before disarming completely, we must have some sort of guarantee that you are not deluding yourself with false hopes. On what do you ground your expectations of success?"

"On the simple fact, that it is my interest to succeed," rejoined the financier, curtly; and this answer was so pregnant of confidence that it carried conviction with it. The Minister found nothing to reply, and the audience terminated. M. Macrobe, who had been kept standing all the while, retreated as he had come, with a slight bow, in which a little deference was mingled with a good deal of self-possession and no small dose of independence. M. Gribaud watched him go, and when the door had closed behind him, fell to rubbing one of his thick ears, thoughtfully, with a knotty forefinger, and muttered: "That fellow is a rogue to beware of. I wonder what his game is?" And, probably, speculations on this horny subject continued to harass the great Minister for the rest of the day: for M. de Beaufeuillet, the secretary, and the score of ambitious supplicants in the ante-rooms, soon had occasion to observe that his Excellency was in no better humor after his interview with M. Macrobe than he had been before it.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### MADemoiselle Angélique.

IN proportion as the shares of the Crédit Parisien rose, and the position of its Chairman became more brilliant, the world began to ask itself, with some curiosity, who the daughter of that gentleman would marry. The question was not altogether without interest, for it was reported that Mlle. Angélique Macrobe would have ten million

frances to her portion: and there were rumors that no less a person than the Prince of Arcola sought the honor of obtaining her hand.

However that might be, the young lady herself was to be seen every day in the Bois de Boulogne, surrounded by a glittering cavalcade of suitors, who pranced on various qualities of hacks round her showy barouche, bowed down to their saddle-bows in offering her their homage, and sometimes went the length of pressing extremely tender billet-doux into her hand when they thought there was nobody looking. Of course Mdlle. Angélique's aunt sat by to act as chaperon, but that excellent lady, who could never forget the time when she had cooked the boiled beef which formed the staple article of M. Macrobe's daily banquets in the days when he was a struggling man, thinking a good deal more about the pence than he did now about the pounds — Mdlle. Dorothée was too much overawed by the dazzling presence of dukes and marquises to have any discernment left as to whether what these brilliant pretenders said and did was proper or not. When a handsome, lispng sprig of nobility bent over the carriage-door, she would muse in bewilderment how much that young man could spend a year for his yellow kid-gloves; and when some enterprising *roué*, seeing her mild inquiring glance fixed on him, fancied she was watching to see whether he pushed things too far with her niece, he would be completely out of his reckoning. The poor lady was simply wondering what his Sunday clothes could be like, since those he wore of a week-day were so fine.

As for Mademoiselle Angélique, she delighted, in her own inanimate way, in the life she was leading. To be dressed in light-blue silk and soft clouds of Valenciennes lace; to drive about in the barouche, and see people stare at her; to have a box at the Opera, another at the "Italiens," another at every theatre when there was a new performance on; all this was better than being at school under those provoking nuns, who taught one when Clovis the First ascended the throne, and when Clovis the Second descended from it. Then the gentlemen with the yellow gloves were amusing. They said funny things to make her laugh. That M. Gousset, for instance, called going to church the "baptism of new bonnets," and confession "clearing the conscience of its past sins in order to make room for those to come." The Prince of Arcola, to be sure, was a little grave: he didn't laugh so much. One of her school-friends had asked her whether it was true she was going to marry him. She didn't know; papa hadn't spoken to her about it. If

papa wished it, she should not mind. The Prince was always very kind to her, but she should like him to laugh a little more; it was more pleasant.

Every morning the butler of the Hôtel Macrobe brought in on a silver tray a whole pyramid of letters, burning acrostics, bouquets, and novels inscribed "with the author's compliments," all intended for Mademoiselle Angélique. The letters and acrostics were generally opened by M. Macrobe, and with the acrostics he seldom failed to light his cigar. The nosegays were stuck in vases, and the novels were handed over to Mademoiselle Angélique to read, if she cared to do so, which she never did. There were dozens of them ranged very neatly on the bookshelves of her boudoir, with the leaves cut of course (by a footman), so that an author, if he should chance to call and take up his own work for curiosity's sake, should never discover that it had not been perused. Mademoiselle Angélique did not like reading. "You have no idea how much they made us read at school," she would tell you, with a pretty, rueful expression on her bewitching face. She preferred drawing thatched cottages on a piece of white paper with a blue pencil; and when she was tired of that, she had a large red and green macaw on a gilt perch, whom she could tease with a silver bodkin.

She was precisely engaged in this last amusing occupation, when M. Macrobe invaded her bower one fine autumn morning some weeks after Horace Gerold's duel. M. Macrobe was always brisk, whether he had any thing to say or not; but this time he *had* something to say.

At sight of her father, Mademoiselle Angélique abandoned the bird of gay plumage, and put up her face to be kissed.

"My pet, I have pleasant news for you," began the financier. "I mean to give a fancy dress and masked *déjeûner* in the country next month. I have hired a large villa and gardens for the express purpose. M. Girth, the *costumier*, will be here in an hour to show you designs for a costume — it must be a rich one. M. Gousset, whose taste is faultless, promised me to come and help me choose it. And — ahem! where is your aunt Dorothée? Ha, there you are, sister. You will have to choose yourself a costume too. Blanche de Castille, I should think, or Catherine de Medicis would do very well.

"Oh, dear me, Prosper, you can't be thinking of putting me into fancy dress!" was aunt Dorothée's scared exclamation.

"Why not? Stuff and nonsense! Everybody must be travestied. You'll wear a mask, too — a velvet one with lace."

"Holy Virgin!" cried the poor lady, piteously. "And shall I be obliged to show my legs, like those women at the play?"

"Your legs? No; what are you talking about? And don't say the play—it's provincial; say the theatre. Angélique, my pet, there will be no time to lose. As soon as you have chosen your dress, you must have it made up. I have called at Pochemolle's, and they'll send somebody over this morning to take orders for all the satin and velvet you may want. Girth will supply the needle-women. Ah, and he'll have plenty to do, preparing dresses for this breakfast. I intend it shall be a fête such as has never been seen within living memory. There'll be a ball after it; and fireworks—a twenty thousand francs' worth. But we'll have only two thousand invitations—people shall go down on their knees for tickets. I have my reasons for all this. Eh, eh, it will be a magic sight!"

"Oh, papa, how nice!" exclaimed Angélique, in obedient ecstasy; and she began to wonder whether her costume would be pink or blue.

"Twenty thousand francs of fireworks—two thousand invitations! Gracious mercy! where's all that money to come from?" ejaculated Aunt Dorothee, feebly staring at the chimney-piece.

But at that moment the butler opened the door and announced: "Monsieur Girth."

And the celebrated *costumier* was introduced.

He entered with grace, composed in his mien, irreproachable in his attire, easy in his salutation without being familiar. Behind him a satellite, with two immense folios, which were placed on the table. The strangest thing about Mr. Girth was that, holding the sceptre of fashion in the capital of fashion, he himself was a Briton born. You could pretty well guess this from his broad shoulders, light hair, and correctly-cut sandy whiskers.

"You keep good time, I see, M. Girth," said M. Macrobe, cheerfully.

"Punctuality is the politeness of tradesmen as of kings, sir," answered Mr. Girth, with a slightly foreign accent; "but I feared I was a few minutes behind my time, from having been delayed by the Duchess of Argenteuil—a wedding-dress for her Grace's daughter. I am also afraid I must hurry away in half an hour, to remit three dresses to a courier specially sent by the Empress of Austria."

Mr. Girth threw out these distinguished names without embarrassment, as if he had plenty more of the same grain ready to produce as occasion should serve him.

"Dear me," rejoined M. Macrobe. "I was in hopes you could have stayed until M. Arsène Gousset arrived to guide us in our choice. I expected him here by this time."

"Here is M. Gousset, papa," exclaimed Angélique.

And effectively that gentleman appeared, smiling and irreproachably dressed, coming up through the conservatory of camellias and ferns that adjoined Mademoiselle Angélique's boudoir.

He bowed to the two ladies, and shook hands with the financier. Mr. Girth made obeisance to him with a respectful inclination of the head.

"Well, Monsieur Girth, armed with your two manuals of elegance, I see. I have come to take a lesson in taste."

"Nay, sir. It is for M. Arsène Gousset to give, not to receive such lessons," answered the *costumier*, amiably.

"H'm! I don't know. I gave a description of a lady's dress in my last novel, and Madame de Masseline, one of your customers, told me I was at least six years behindhand with the fashions. I think she was right, for I lately saw, at one of the Embassies, a dress in which there was blue, green, yellow, and red, all mixed up together, somehow like in a Neapolitan ice. But they told me it was quite correct."

"May I ask at which of the Embassies, sir?"

"Your own: the English."

"Ah, yes; at the English Embassy they will do these kind of things," replied Mr. Girth, with a deprecatory shrug. "My countrywomen do not understand dressing, which is a pity, with their beauty. In England we have no middle class between those who don't dress and those who over-dress. Yet the science of costume is not difficult. Harmonize—there is the whole pith of it."

"Some pretty dresses here," murmured M. Gousset, turning over the leaves of the first album—"this one especially."

"Yes: a Francesca di Rimini, originally made for the Princess of Cleves. Her Serene Highness had been reading some Swedish romances, and desired to be costumed as 'Margaret Waldemar.' I had to use much diplomacy to persuade her Highness that she had neither the Northern complexion, nor the warrior-look necessary for the part. She had dark hair, and was sentimental. As 'Francesca di Rimini' she looked perfect. But that is the historical album. This is the fancy one, which will, perhaps, suit Mademoiselle better."

So the leaves of the fancy book were turned over, and nymphs, goddesses, water-

fairies, and cardinal virtues appeared in fascinating succession. At every page Angélique languidly exclaimed, "Oh!" and "Beautiful!" Aunt Dorothée, from hearing the prices called out, was quickly reduced to a state of intellectual coma, from which M. Gousset's suggested amendments—all of an expensive character—were not calculated to revive her.

The financier nodded his approval now and then, but deferred all practical decision to the novelist.

At last, by common consent, the choice was made to rest between a costume of Hebe and one of The Rising Morn.

"Something rich," hinted M. Macrobe.

"The Hebe would be simple," remarked the artistic Mr. Girth: "pearls, white silk and tulle, a little blue to give relief—perhaps a few flower-buds. The dress would not be more than twelve hundred francs. But I think the Hebe a little trite: I made three Hebes last winter season. The Rising Morn would be a much more imposing conception, and would harmonize exactly with Mademoiselle's rare beauty. Pale blue and white silk, with tulle as before, but arranged differently in diaphanous clouds, and the body much more *decolleté*; diamonds in profusion, to simulate dewdrops; gold powder in the hair—though, really, Mademoiselle scarcely needs it—and a tiara, with a rising sun in topazes and brilliants. To come up to my full idea in point of splendor, there should be a ten thousand guineas' worth of diamonds with this costume."

"Nothing to prevent it—nothing," answered M. Macrobe, enthusiastically.

"Well, if Mademoiselle decides on this costume, I think I can predict a success, especially by gaslight. It will be the finest thing seen since the 'Night' of the Duchess of Alba, though that was not finer."

Needless to say that Mademoiselle did decide upon that costume, and, hearing that the "person from M. Pochemolle's" had arrived, retired to give orders for all the quantities of silk and tulle which Mr. Girth was good enough to jot down on a paper.

The "person" had been shown into Mademoiselle's dressing-room.

Angélique hastened there, and found Georgette.

It should be mentioned that the two girls had been at school—or rather, at convent—together some years before.

Angélique's father was then less than nobody; Georgette's was a respectable well-to-do tradesman: it was, therefore, Georgette who held the upper rank. The parts were now reversed, and perhaps,

even in Angélique's naïvely serene temperament, lurked a spark of that good feeling which makes us so dearly love to patronize those who once have seen us lowly.

Anyhow she said, with a sweetly friendly smile: "O Georgette! they never told me it was you: I wonder why they didn't. Do you know, I've been choosing a dress—at least, M. Gousset did for me—which is to have ten thousand guineas' worth of diamonds on it? It's a great deal, ten thousand guineas, don't you think so? How much is a guinea, I forget?"

Georgette smiled—a little sad smile it was, for the poor child did not look in mirthful mood—and said: "Are these the orders on the paper, Mademoiselle Angélique?"

"Yes, those are the orders, Dear Georgette. Monsieur Girth wrote them; and he's going to send two needle-women to work every day; but I am to try on before him, and the last touches are to be made by his foreman. Yes, I think that's what he said. But it seems odd—doesn't it?—for a foreman to be sewing ladies' dresses? Ah, but I'm forgetting you—you'll take a glass of Madeira and some cake to please me. I am going to ring for it. Then I'll show you over the house: I think you've never seen it. It's very big: I don't fancy I know my way all over it by myself."

"No, Mademoiselle Angélique, thank you. Please don't ring," said Georgette. "I must be home soon; but thank you very much, all the same."

"Oh, dear! but you must take something," exclaimed Angélique.

Then stopping, and gazing with a perplexed, rather astonished air at her friend, she said: "But, Georgette, you don't look as you used to—you've been ill, haven't you? You're quite pale; why didn't you tell me?"

And with an impulsive movement not common with her, she seated herself on an ottoman, drew Georgette to her, and kissed her.

"Tell me what it is, dear?" she said.

Georgette's heart was in that full state when the least drop of sympathy caused it to overflow. She burst into tears.

Angélique was much astonished and distressed.

"Dear me, I wish Aunt Dorothée were here," she exclaimed. "I always go to her when I cry. But tell me, is it any thing we can do for you? You were always good to me, you know, and you would never be sad if I could help it. I wish my head were better than it is; perhaps

I might guess then without needing to ask you."

"No, no, it's nothing, Mdle. Angélique: it will pass away soon."

And Georgette made an effort to dry her eyes.

But it was only an effort, and it failed: so that when Aunt Dorothée came up a few minutes afterwards to rejoin her niece she found the two young girls sobbing by each other's side — Georgette violently, Angélique helplessly and silently, from being unable to console her friend. The excellent woman was not long in adding her own tears to the group. But it was her mission in this life, poor soul, to boil beef and comfort the sorrowful: so after crying she gently pressed the afflicted girl to unburden her heart; and by degrees, by gentle questions, by dint of the confidence her kind worthy face inspired, she got at the truth. And that truth was the old, old story of a first love crossed. Georgette's father was bent upon marrying her against her will to a man she had never loved. He insisted upon it. Her mother, too, at first on her side, had ended by taking her father's, and they were importuning her so much that she knew she could not hold out longer. Besides, of what use was it to resist — she could never marry the man she loved? He would not have her; he was too high in the world, too much a gentleman to marry a poor girl like her. Yet she had once thought he loved her a little: it was an error. No, she would rather not tell his name. He had done nothing for which she could blame him. She would dry her tears and try to forget him. Well-meaning Georgette! this attempt was no more successful than the other. After drying her eyes she faltered again, and in this new gush of grief revealed that it was Horace Gerold she loved.

An hour later, when she was gone, Angélique, her eyes still red, stole down stairs to look for her father. She had a scheme on her mind. The financier was alone in her boudoir examining a landscape he had bought the day before, for about a third of its value, of a jaded artist. He was deliberating where he should hang this, for the walls were pretty well covered as it was with good pictures purchased adroitly. His back was turned to the door.

She touched his arm.

"O papa! I am so miserable, and I have come to ask you to do me a favor."

He laid down the picture a little surprised. This was the first time his daughter had ever asked him to do any thing.

"It's not for myself, papa, — at least, if

you do it, it will please me quite as much as if it were for me. It's for Georgette, you know, who was at school with me. She's been here this morning, and she says they want to marry her to a man she doesn't like. I think she said a commercial traveller. So I thought I'd come to you, though she told me not to do it, and ask you if something couldn't be done? If you spoke to her father, he would listen to you, and you might tell him — what she hasn't the courage to — that she loves a gentleman. I am not sure whether I ought to tell you his name — I mean this gentleman's — but I will. It's M. Horace Gerold, the same whom you know" —

M. Macrobe, whose face had remained at first impassive, underwent a sudden elongation of countenance at the mention of Horace Gerold. He kissed his daughter on the forehead and turned abruptly on his heel.

"That's queer," muttered he to himself. "I wonder what it means. I suppose there's no new unpleasantness under these cards. H'm! Horace Gerold is not the man to marry a girl of that rank, even if he were twenty times in love with her. I know that much of him. Still it's curious. Perhaps there may be a way of turning this new affair to account. I must think about it."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### "THE FUTURE MADAME FILOSELLE."

"HA, Gerold! how do you do? You have become quite a stranger here; but not for long, I hope?"

"Well, sir, my six months of disbaring will be over soon. Perhaps I shall practice again then."

"Quite right. The bar is the true career for talents fresh and vigorous like yours. By the way, how about your trial for that duel affair; are you committed?"

"I have just come from the *juge d'instruction's* closet. That is what brought me here this morning. But it seems I am to hear no more about the matter. I am discharged, as they say."\*

"You owe that to your second, M. Macrobe, I suppose?"

\* It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that preliminary examinations are, in France, conducted *secretly*; and that the examining magistrate has unlimited discretionary powers.

"I think so. Perhaps a little, too, to the strength of my case. My antagonist was the aggressor. I acted in self-defence, and the jury could not but have acquitted me. The trial, however, would have afforded our counsel an opportunity for attacking the system of official journalism, and that I fancy would scarcely have suited the government. They had more interest in hushing up the affair than we had."

Horace was replying to the barrister Claude Febvre, in the great hall of the Palace of Justice, where, as his interlocutor observed, he had for some time past become a stranger. He was still on the staff of the "*Sentinelle*," but only waiting for the occasion to sever a connection which had ceased to be cordial, and which there appeared little likelihood of ever re-establishing on its old footing. Indeed, the breach with Nestor Roche was widening rather than otherwise. The editor's confidence in his contributor was shaken. He tried not to show it, but the fact was patent, revealing itself in a host of small symptoms, not the least significant of which was the unusual latitude he allowed Horace as regards his articles. He never altered these articles now; never ran his pen through this or that sentence, pointing out with his gruff voice and friendly look, why he thought it wise to do so. The articles were printed as they came; and it is only fair to add, that if the editor had ever been troubled with apprehensions lest his headstrong young friend should drag the paper into trouble, all fears on this account were now definitely appeased. The duel, or rather the gathering intimacy with M. Macrobe which followed that event, appeared to have marked a new era in Horace's opinions, or at least in his style. He now wrote temperately, with an absence of all acrimony, sometimes even with a courtesy of expression which made the rougher Republicans amongst his fellow-contributors quiver with astonishment. Not that he was less liberal; on the contrary, he was perhaps more so. But it was the easy, philosophical liberalism of the gentleman — the liberalism of the fortunate man who sees things through pink glasses, and begins to think that after all the world is not so black as it has been painted.

And how, indeed, could it be otherwise? Every day added some new sweets to Horace's life. His walks along the Boulevards resembled triumphal processions. Distinguished men saluted him; great novelists and journalists nodded amicably to him as one of their own set. Bonapartist writers gave him a wide berth. When he went to

the opera, he must have been blind not to notice that women turned their opera-glasses in his direction — often kept them so turned a long time — and then M. Arsène Gousset, or the Prince of Arcola, would come down and claim to introduce him to Madame la Comtesse This or That, who desired to make his acquaintance. As Mr. Drydust remarked, it was flattering. He knew what it was from having gone through it himself.

"Ah, *mon cher*," would add that eminent person, who was beginning to give him a good deal of his company, "take my word for it, extreme republicanism won't do. I've seen it act — went to America on purpose to study it. The Americans have no opera of their own, no theatre, no novels worth mentioning, no pictures. And depend upon it, these are the essentials of life."

"What are, novels or the opera?"

"Both. Liberty should be, not an end, but a means. You don't come into the world to put your vote into a ballot-box; you come to enjoy yourself. If you can't get the enjoyment without the vote, then agitate for the vote; but if you have the enjoyment, where is the use of voting?"

"You mean that despotism which gives you operas and museums is the *ne plus ultra* of good government?"

"Well, nearly. I adore despotism. Nothing great has ever been done without it. See this new Boulevard Malesherbes they are building; look at the Bois de Boulogne — two hundred million francs spent upon it within two years. Parliamentary government would never have done that for you."

"Then you must be very anxious to see the form of government in your own country changed."

"No; with England it is different. Freedom is necessary to the English temperament. We must have a great deal of freedom. But we are the exception."

Horace smiled; but these conversations, and a good many others of the kind, conducted by choice spirits like M. Gousset, were insensibly operating upon him. He laughed at the paradoxes he heard; would now and then take the trouble of refuting them; but like a man who has got into the habit of sipping absinthe, and, after finding his first glasses bitter, grows to like the acrid flavor: so now it rather amused him to hear the cynical witticisms of his new friends; and he more than once caught himself admitting — not aloud, but internally — that these agreeable fellows were much more genial company than the Re-

publicans pure he occasionally met. This was especially his train of thought on the morning he exchanged the few words in passing with the barrister, Claude Febvre. It was a clear, sunny day, his blood flowed prosperously in his veins, and the balminess of the air came as a welcome relief after an unusually gloomy hour or two passed the evening before in the society of some fervid Radicals. Never had these men — journalists and ex-politicians for the most part — shown themselves more iconoclastic and rabid. "Upon my word!" muttered Horace, as he descended the staircase of the Palace of Justice. "That may be liberalism, but if so, liberalism, like most other human inventions, would seem to be perfectible."

The streets were alive with that animation which buoyant weather begets. Cabs flitting by crossed each other with rapidity; on the tops of the omnibuses passengers talked and laughed; and the pink and yellow playbills on the kiosks gleamed singularly fresh and new. It was a day to be out and walking. Horace sauntered down the quays, stopping now and then to examine the curious collections of old prints and books exposed at the open-air stalls, which encumber the left bank of the Seine; but pausing more often to consider those wonderful pieces of rusty armor, those cracked plates of three-century-old china, and the jappaned bowls of rare antique coins exposed in the windows of the bric-a-brac shops. He had just spent a minute thus profitably, and was turning to resume his stroll, when a small active pedestrian, in a showy waistcoat and loaded with a carpet-bag, ran almost into him, apologizing in the same breath for his awkwardness, and laying the blame on the narrow pavement. Horace bowed and was passing on; but the other, as if struck by his face, stopped, reddened a little, raised his hat suddenly, and said: "I beg your pardon. I believe I have the honor of addressing the Marquis of Clairefontaine — M. Horace Gerold? Pardon the liberty," he resumed immediately, "but I feel myself under an obligation: I owe you a debt of thanks, and I am thankful to have the opportunity of repaying it. My name is Filoselle — Hector Filoselle, at your service."

"M. Filoselle — yes, perfectly; I remember;" and Horace began to contemplate this gentleman with some interest.

"Yes, I owe you a debt of gratitude, Monsieur le Marquis — that is, Monsieur," said M. Filoselle, who was quickly regaining his self-possession, "I am told you were good enough to employ your eloquence on

my behalf. M. Pochemolle, my future father-in-law, has informed me of the circumstance. My future mother-in-law, you are aware, was at first opposed to the match. I have seen many mothers-in-law both in France and abroad, and have had occasion to notice that they are always opposed to something. Marriage, Monsieur le Marquis, would be a sacred institution but for mothers-in-law; when I am wedded I propose to keep mine at a distance. Mdlle. Georgette, my future wife, will, I have no doubt, subscribe to these views. Meanwhile, reciprocating my tender passion as she does, I am convinced that she entertains the same grateful feelings towards Monsieur as I myself."

Horace slightly bent his head without answering.

"I should have sought the opportunity of saying all this to Monsieur before; but the pursuit of business is engrossing; it has kept me away from Paris these last six weeks and will take me again into the country by the early train to-morrow. To amass money, M. le Marquis, with the intention of bestowing it on the object of one's worship, is an occupation which has always seemed to me the noblest of all; and this reminds me that if Monsieur should want a few dozen of champagne, light and dry, vintage of '49; or a flute — rosewood, with double silver stops, and a case to match, portable and convenient — he would find a profit in dealing with me preferably to with a retail house. I have another favor to ask, but this demand ought, perhaps, to be proffered by the future Madame Filoselle. However, if M. le Marquis would so far honor us as to be present at the ceremony, the date of which is not yet fixed, but shall be made known to M. le Marquis, he would be doing a gracious thing, for which he would be entitled to our sincerest thanks. Indeed, I may say, that by his presence M. le Marquis would be giving the final sanction to his own work; for if Hymen has happy days in store for me, I shall never be able to forget that it is to the Marquis of Clairefontaine that I owe it."

Was this true? Did Monsieur Filoselle owe his prospective connubial bliss to M. le Marquis? One might have doubted it on seeing the pre-occupied and not over-pleased look on Horace Gerold's features as he moved away after this chance encounter. Why did things turn up in this way? Horace had resolved that he would think no more about Georgette, and he had really tried not to do so. He had even done more; he had avoided all occasions of meeting her; and once when he was certain that she was not in the shop, he had entered, and resolutely undertaken a furious



long eulogy of M. Filoselle, whom he didn't know — all this with a view to mollifying M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle: in which object he had ended by succeeding. It is true that after this achievement he had retired, not particularly satisfied that what he had done was feeling, or even honest. But he wished to put away temptation, and the end in such cases generally appears to justify the means. One thing, however, he had neglected to do, and that the simplest of all: Why had he not removed? He did not know himself. He reasoned that the thing was not necessary since Georgette herself would soon be married and gone. But now, hearing M. Filoselle talk, it occurred to him that he had been unwise. It would have certainly been better to remove. He could not stand this commercial fellow coming many times and thanking him like that.

He walked home out of humor. A regret that M. Filoselle's employers had not sent that gentleman to sell their wares in the antipodes floated uppermost in his mind. Then he anathematized M. Pochemolle and all French fathers collectively who made a traffic of marriage. He wondered how Georgette looked now? It was a long time since he had seen her. Yes, weeks. What had she been thinking of him during all this while? She was indignant, of course; that must inevitably be, for women never view these things in the proper light. Still, he should be sorry that she should retain a lastingly bad opinion of him. He had acted for the best. Where would be the harm if he stepped in just to say a few kind words and make peace? She was definitely another's now; the attention could not be misconstrued.

He had reached the Rue Ste. Geneviève. He entered.

M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle was at her habitual place behind the counter. M. Pochemolle stood in the centre of the shop, receiving with respect a financial hint or two from M. Macrobe.

The latter accosted Horace, extending his hand.

"My dear young friend, I had called to tell you about this fancy fête of mine. It's got up mainly for you, you know."

Horace's eyes roamed round the shop in search of Georgette. She was seated in a corner, and over the counter, talking to her and smiling, leaned a gentleman, fashionably dressed. They seemed tolerably engrossed in their conversation. "And," thought Horace, with a sudden sharp pang at the heart, "their heads are very close together."

This pang was not lessened when the stranger, turning round, showed his face. It was the Prince of Arcola.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### M. MACROBE AT "HOME."

M. MACROBE had determined that his fête should be a success; and, in so far as the preliminaries could augur, his wish appeared likely to be realized. M. de Tirecruchon, released from captivity, heralded the event in the "Gazette des Boulevards." Mr. Drydust talked of it to his British readers, giving them full statistics as to the number of wax-candles that would be burned, the *menu* of the supper, and the price of the champagne — nothing inferior to Cliquot, twelve shillings a bottle. Suburban Clapham rejoiced over the feast as if it were going to be present there; the semi-detached villas in Camberwell, Battersea, Islington, and Chelsea, conversed anxiously about the entertainment during a fortnight beforehand.

But it was naturally in Paris that the coming revelry caused most sensation. The windows of the drapers' shops along the whole length of the Boulevards and the Rue de la Paix, bloomed out with flashing satins and rich-hued velvets, festoons of gold and silver lace, superb plumes, and countless stage accessories, amongst which, skillfully interspersed to catch the eye, shone gaudy designs of fancy dresses — mediæval queens and Hungarian peasant-girls, legendary amazons and modern *vivandières*. Monsieur Louis, "Artiste Capillaire to the Court" (hairdresser, as we say in English), had got his "list" full — which meant that on the day of the fête he would start on his artistic-cocapillary rounds at six sharp, in the morning, and terminate his labors towards midnight. Lucky the ladies who, for a hundred francs' fee, could obtain a quarter of an hour of this gifted being's time! He drove up to the door in his brougham, raced up to Madame's dressing-room three steps at a time, expected to find Madame ready-seated before her toilet-glass, the maids in attendance, the combs, brushes, curling-tongs, and pots of *bandoline*, all in a row within hand reach; and even then he would glare like a gladiator and stamp his autocratic foot if the maid was stupid — took a quarter of a minute, for instance, getting Madame's tiara out of the jewel-case, or in her hurry dropped a hair-pin. As for Mr. Girth, he was, of course, run off his legs.

There were no bounds, he would say to the exigencies of ladies. If he called upon all who wrote to him he should never have a spare minute at his command. So he was really obliged to establish a rule. He would be at home at stated hours; other stated hours he would confine to calls; but his patronesses must please to understand

that on no account could he ever devote more than half an hour to one consultation. It is not certain whether his patronesses understood this or not. Anyhow, their broughams extended in a three-hundred-yards *queue* outside his door, and ladies who would not have waited five minutes to please their lawful husbands, sat, with the patience of saints, their two and four hours at a time, to bide the good pleasure of Mr. Girth. Perhaps the only lady who, previous to the fête, was not called upon to undergo some ordeal of the kind was Mademoiselle Angélique.

As daughter of the host, she was entitled to exceptional regard. Mr. Girth did himself the honor of waiting upon her personally once or twice a week, and she, apprised beforehand of his coming, awaited it with meditative anxiety, as we do the Doctor, or an R. A. who is coming to paint us. It was a scene not devoid of grandeur. Mademoiselle Angélique, attired in the as yet unfinished costume, stood motionless, with a cheval-glass to the right, another to the left, and a third in the background. Behind, but out of the line of sight, two attendant needle-women and a maid, silent and awestruck. On a sofa Mademoiselle Dorothee casting glances of resignation at the ceiling; and in the foreground, Mr. Girth, gloved, meditating and impassive: throwing out curt orders to an aid-de-camp foreman who deferentially consigned them to a notebook. Michael Angelo superintending the works of the cupola of St. Peter's; Lenôtre, planning the royal gardens of Versailles, were not more great and admirable.

To say that Angélique took pleasure in all this would be true, and yet her joy was not quite unalloyed. Her rich dress and the approaching fête were perplexing her a little. No doubt it was satisfactory to be informed that she would be queen of a pageant unsurpassed in splendor and unsurpassable; and to see the pretty eyes of her lady friends twinkle jealously as they examined her costume, and the ten thousand guineas' worth of diamonds to be tacked thereon, was a sensation of which any lady, however good at heart, will easily understand the sweets. But underlying these gratifying impressions, lurked a vague presentiment that this unusually brilliant festival had not been projected without some object in view — M. Macrobe, she knew, was not the man to invest twenty thousand francs in fireworks for the pleasure of watching colored sparks fall — and somehow Angélique began to fancy that with her father's object, whatever it was, she herself might not be altogether dissociated. It must be confessed that her perspicacity scarcely went deeper than this. She thought, in-

deed, a little of the Prince of Arcola, wondered why, if he really intended marrying her, he did not propose sooner; but she was at a long way from guessing the truth, when the financier repeated to her for the fourth or fifth time:

"My pet, you must mind and be very civil to M. Horace Gerold, who will be present at the fête. You will find him a most amiable young man."

"Certainly," thought she, "I will be civil to M. Gerold," and she was very glad at having the opportunity of meeting him. As to his being an amiable young man, her father knew best, but it was not exceedingly amiable to act as he had done by Georgette. It is true that he was a rich and high-born gentleman, so they pretended, and that Georgette was a tradesman's daughter; but after all what did that matter? Had she not heard M. Gousset say often that a woman's rank was her beauty, that King Coph — Cophet-something had married a beggar-maid, and that he had done quite right, for that the party honored by this transaction was not the beggar-maid, but King Coph — himself — why then should not M. Gerold do as much? Georgette was not a beggar-maid: at school she used to carry off prizes which she — Angélique — could never manage to do; and she was pretty — oh, yes! prettier far than any girl she had ever seen. Everybody declared so; even the Prince of Arcola, who had been to Pochemolle's the other day with her father, had come back quite enthusiastic about the young girl's beauty.

She wondered, in her mild, meek way, whether she could not try something to soften M. Gerold — he did not look like a very hard young man, and she was truly anxious to befriend Georgette. If her father had done what she wanted, the whole thing might no doubt have been settled by this time; but her father did not seem pleased at her interfering in the matter. He had kissed her quite abruptly and gone away, and the next time she had appealed to him, he had answered, impatiently: "Tut, tut, my pet, Georgette is a little goose, and you too."

She could not see why Georgette was a goose, though she had deliberated upon the matter gravely. It was not being a goose to cry because one had been jilted. Aunt Dorothee said it was a shame for gentlemen to steal away the hearts of young girls; that it was much more cruel and dishonorable than robbing money. Then Georgette was so gentle, too! "Yes," thought Angélique, "I will try whether I cannot work upon M. Gerold's good feelings. I will take advantage of his presence at the fête to speak to him." This wise idea, which

occurred to her after many days of reflection, she kept to herself; but every day the idea twined itself more tightly, like a strong shoot of ivy, round her usually inert imagination. Meanwhile, on the prettiest sheet of toned paper in the world, and with the tiniest gold pen extracted from a liliputian desk, she wrote to her friend "*not to be miserable*," drawing three lines under the word miserable, which, as connoisseurs in ladies' calligraphy are aware, means that there are three excellent reasons, if not more, why one should not be *miserable*. She added that she had got a plan for "*setting every thing right*," — words underlined as before.

It is probable that if M. Macrobe had intercepted this affectionate communication on its way to the post, and taken cognizance of its contents, he would have frowned, and with considerable vexation. But he was too busy now to see much of his daughter. Every spare hour he could snatch from business he spent at Marly in the villa he had hired, a noble residence with a beauteous park, in which a whole army of workmen were employed, erecting marquees, extemporizing terraces, and laying out parterres of costly flowers. Nothing was to be wanting to the completeness of the fête. In case of rain there were arrangements for covering in the entire grounds. Châlets, bright with paint and gilding, verdant with creeping foliage, had been run up here and there, and furnished with a luxury that could not have been excelled, had these ephemeral dwellings been destined to last permanently. To keep the grounds and line the approaches to the ball-rooms, a hundred men, attired as halberdiers, had been retained; and two hundred boys, dressed as pages of Francis the First, and selected for their comely looks, were to officiate as waiters. This part of the arrangements had been effected by a celebrated theatrical manager, expert in *mise en scène*; and the same enterprising genius had suggested that a hundred of the prettiest girls amongst the metropolitan *corps-de-ballet* should be recruited to act as *bouquetières*, and distribute to the guests flowers and bonbons. The programme might be altered according to circumstance, but for the present it was as follows: At four, the *déjeuner*; at six, the drawing of a tombola with valuable prizes; at ten, fireworks; after which the grounds were to be illuminated with an invention, then in its infancy, called "electric light;" masks were to be put on; and there was to be a ball, with supper and cotillon, lasting — until it pleased Heaven to make the sun rise.

Small wonder that M. Macrobe was busy. He had long ago been obliged to relent from his original decision of only issuing two thousand invitations. No half-dozen post-

bags could have contained all the letters he received, cajoling, begging, entreating, raving for tickets. What made it difficult to refuse, too, was that there were a good many shareholders of the *Crédit Parisien* amongst the supplicants. These honest and importunate persons claimed the favor of an invitation as a sort of right, and they were delighted to hear of the fête, for it is evident that a chairman who has so much money to spend must be looking very closely after the interests of his shareholders. In fine, M. Macrobe had been obliged to increase the tickets to four thousand, without thereby greatly diminishing the number of those who in private declared they were being shamefully ill-used, and in public that they had never solicited invitations, not they, and that they certainly should not have gone to the party even if they had been asked. But M. Macrobe could afford to make light of these fox and grapes rancors. The essential point in his eyes was that all the personages of importance whom he had invited had accepted with alacrity, and that Horace Gerold — the most important of any — had, with perfect good-nature, entered into the spirit of the thing, and promised to come in costume. "So that's all right," muttered the financier; "and I think this seed-corn we are scattering will soon begin to fructify — barring accidents," added this prudent gentleman, who, in his calculations, always left a wide margin for contingencies.

At last the long-looked-for day of the fête arrived.

The evening before, Horace had attempted, without success, to induce his brother to accompany him. Emile had refused firmly but gently; alleging no reason, however, save the somewhat indefinite one, that he should probably be busy. Horace had hired for three hundred francs a magnificent costume in the fashion prevailing under Henry II. (of France). It was white satin slashed with *cérise*; a short mantle of white velvet profusely embroidered with silver fell over the shoulders, a silver-hilted sword in *cérise-velvet* sheath hung by his side, and a flat bonnet with white plumes fastened with an aigrette of diamonds adorned the head. Now, it may be weakness, but when we have attired ourselves in a garb of this sort, and are surprised by a friend contemplating ourselves in a glass, we expect to be complimented on our appearance, otherwise we look foolish. Horace felt so when Emile, entering unexpectedly, just as he had put on a pair of red-heeled shoes, and was watching the effect of them, said gravely: "Oh! I beg your pardon, I see you are engaged."

"Engaged! no," exclaimed Horace, red-

dening with some confusion. "Come in, man, what is it you want to say?"

"I was going to write to Brussels to-day. Have you any message I can send?"

"My love, of course. But what are you going to write about?" asked Horace, wishing he had got his black coat and trousers on instead of these silk stockings and this sword.

"Well, you know, I received a letter yesterday:—and, by the way, what am I to answer about the passage that concerns you?"

Horace sat down on his bed and played moodily with his bonnet.

"How am I to say?" answered he in a vexed tone. "The whole thing is absurd and calumnious. Some of those Republicans of Brussels have been telling my father that they hear I am keeping loose company, and am turning renegade; and he feels pained. Tell him it is not true; and you might add that it is only Republicans who would be capable of inventing such trash; for I am sure I begin to think with Jean Kerjou, that we shouldn't be happy in our party if we didn't perpetually accuse one another of treachery."

"And what am I to say about M. Macrobe?" proceeded Emile quietly.

"M. Macrobe is my friend," replied Horace in an impatient voice. "I've told you so already, and think you might spare me the trouble of repeating it. Write to my father that he is misinformed about the man. Thank God, our father is not cut out of the same wood as his brother Republicans; he has the soul of a gentleman, is just and generous. He can require nothing more when I say that I answer for M. Macrobe's honor on my own."

"On your own honor, brother?" answered Emile doubtfully. "You are not surely in earnest; for if you really went bail for this man's honor, Horace, how could I hold out any longer? You cannot think that I would continue to suspect the man if I thought you convinced of his honesty."

"But why *do* you suspect him?" rejoined Horace with irritation. "What is the meaning of this mania of yours for suspecting people, you who used to be such a good fellow, and never spoke ill of a fly? It seems to me that it is you who are being spoiled by bad company—that of those envious, bilious demagogues whom they tell me you frequent. What has M. Macrobe done to you, come, tell me that; and what has he done to me? Why, since I have come across his path he has done nothing but repay me good for evil—had he been Job himself he could not have evinced more longanimity. I begin by vilifying him in a court of justice—he holds out

his hand to me and asks me to dinner; I cut him—he takes my part when I am publicly insulted, and risks imprisonment by abetting me in a duel; he knows I am a Republican, that is a foe to his party, and he good-naturedly asks my advice about distributing twenty thousand francs to the people of our clique who may have suffered during the revolutions. Frankly, what can be his object? I am no great man that he should have any interest in currying favor with me. I am a poor devil without fortune or title, with only a rag of popularity at my back, which a day has made and which a day may take away. M. Macrobe, on the contrary, is a millionaire with more power than a cabinet minister. It would be both presumptuous and arrogant to pretend that there can be anything else but condescension on his part in treating me in the way he does."

The blood rose to Emile's habitually pale face.

"Well, Horace, this is the last time I shall ever speak about M. Macrobe, then," said he, with the slight hectic cough which excitement of any kind generally brought on. "I will not promise to like the man," added he with an effort. "But your good word is a passport—to, at least, my respect. For your sake I will try to forget what I have heard and believed about M. Macrobe."

And he held out his hand—a white, thin hand it was, and feverish.

"Why won't you go to this fête with me?" asked Horace, still dogged.

"No: don't ask me to do that," pleaded Emile, shaking his head. "To begin with, I should not make a very lively guest; and I hardly think I could afford the expense. Besides, you see it is too late now. I fancy this is the concierge come to tell you that your carriage is waiting."

It was no longer Georgette who run up on these sorts of errands now. The concierge, cap in hand, informed "Monsieur" that a gentleman in a landau with postilions was down below, "dressed like in carnival time." The person meant was the Prince of Arcola, who had arranged to call for Horace and give him a lift. Horace put on his glittering bonnet, wrapped himself in a flowing cloak of white cashmere and descended.

Never since the days of the Grand Monarque, when high court and revelry were held there, had the shady groves of Marly resounded with the echoes of such a festival. It was an event to be remembered evermore by the inhabitants, and to be narrated some eighty years hence by the youngest of them as a reminiscence of how men lived and caroused under the notorious Second Em-

pire. A troop of mounted municipal guards, their steel helmets and breastplates flashing in the sun of a cloudless sky, had been lent by the Prefect of the Seine to act as guard of honor. Picked men, with flowing mustaches, slung carbines, and clinking sabres, they swept up the Grand Avenue at a fast trot half-an-hour in advance of the first carriages; then, having reached their destination, turned and separated—half forming themselves into a glittering semicircle round the park gates, the others starting off by two's to occupy strategical points down the road, and silently point the way to doubting coachmen. Simultaneously a hundred members of the Parisian police took up their position at equidistant spaces of twenty yards on either footway to keep back the curious, and see that the stream of vehicles flowed by uninterrupted. Magnificent policemen these, with cocked hats, straight swords, white gloves, folded arms—men you would have taken for officers in any other country. Then the carriages began to appear, first singly, then two or three almost abreast, as if racing; then one after another, settling gradually into a gorgeous slow-moving procession that seemed never to end, tapering and glimmering far into the distance, out of the reach of sight, like the trail of a starry meteor. The harness of the horses jingled, the hoofs of the noble animals pawed the ground impatiently, large flakes of foam dropped from the furbished bits, coronet after coronet, 'scutcheon after 'scutcheon flashed by on shining panels, and, every now and then, down the whole line there would be that ten minutes' dead stop, which acts on the nerves of fair occupants of broughams, and evokes from the powdered gentlemen on the box such doleful replies as this: "Impossible to move faster, Madame la Marquise; there are more than two hundred carriages ahead of us."

But if the scene without was sufficiently imposing, what language can be used to paint the spectacle within the grounds? Such a sight needs more than a pen. Tents of purple vellum and gold, gilt awnings ablaze with silken streamers; squads of radiant girls with pyramids of flowers piled up in vase-like baskets. On plats of emerald grass, and under the spreading shade of giant oaks, rich carpets and velvet cushions spread out to invite repose; and trenching on the marble whiteness of terraces, the drooping folds of blue, scarlet, and orange draperies. If any thing, the eye had too much of color, and turned with relief to the cool fountains, which threw up their waters in columns of spray, and splashed so musically in the round deep basins. Fair forms leaned over these basins, dipped their hands in, and filled the air with tink-

ling laughter. And these silvery sounds formed a melodious interlude to the strains that issued from the open orchestra pavilions, around which eddied and flowed a festive crowd revelling in garbs of every variety of fashion, richness, and tint.

"Upon my word it seems to be a success," said the Prince of Arcola to his companion as they passed together into a sumptuous reception-marquee where a master of the ceremonies, who looked cut out of a picture by Titian, took their cards.

The master of the ceremonies bowed low before them, and two pages in green and gold stepping forward, relieved the one of his white cashmere cloak, the other of a blue roquelaure that concealed a costume in violet velvet, of the time of Henri IV.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### YOUNG CANDOR, OLD SUBTLETY.

"Now here you are, that's right, and I am going to tell you who all the people are," cried Mr. Drydust, laying hold of Horace's arm as soon as he caught sight of him.

Mr. Drydust figured as a Scottish chieftain, presumably Rob Roy, and his intelligent brow disappeared under a bonnet of warlike dimensions. But he was none the less affable. Slightly embarrassed by a giant claymore from the hilt of which he was afraid to trust his left hand very far, his pace was perhaps less rapid than usual, but he still made excellent play with the hand remaining to him, and waved it about gracefully and easily to give effect to all he said: "Now see," said he; "this is true ease—the ease of an age when men understood costume, and fashioned it so as to give free play to all the limbs. I always feel fettered when I wear a frock coat—pardon, Madame" (Mr. Drydust had tripped up over his claymore), "but in this, one is at home. Aha, there is my friend Catfeesh Pasha; I'll introduce you. I declare this is like the Corso of Rome in Easter week; one meets everybody one knows."

So one did. All Paris was present. Not in truth the Paris which eminent foreigners would have comprehended in that title. One might have searched the whole grounds through without finding a single one of the men whose presence here below will be remembered a hundred years hence. But the Paris of the Second Empire was there, a throng of senators, ministers, deputies, stock-jobbers, patchouli-novelists, eau-de-rose journalists, and the gayer spirits of the

Corps Diplomatique, all in short who would consent to clothe themselves in the garb of departed centuries, and stalk about thus clothed for the amusement of the community. M. Macrobe had allowed of no exceptions in this respect: modern attire had been pitilessly excluded, and Horace met, within a space of five minutes, a cabinet minister dressed as a Turk, a councillor of state habited as a Jew peddler, and an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary disporting himself very successfully as a Cochinchina fowl.

In these sorts of things it is highly essential that the guests should not be thrown too much upon their own resources, but that there should be a few sportive minds, to leaven the lump, play the fool a little, and keep the merriment from flagging. M. Arsène Gousset had undertaken this part. He was the presiding genius of the fête. Assisted by M. de Tirecruchon, some young journalists, and three or four artists, he darted about from group to group organizing quadrille parties, introducing people one to another, and seeing that there was an endless flow of champagne. He had also composed a jocular "Gazette des Masques," which, printed in gold on white satin, was distributed broadcast by him and his acolytes with piping cries such as news-venders utter.

Horace would have been glad to sit down somewhere, whence he could have seen without being himself observed; but this would not have tallied with the plan of his host, which was to make him an actor in, not a mere spectator of, the pageant. M. Macrobe had instructed swift messengers to bring him immediate intelligence of Horace's arrival, and the latter had scarcely had time to accustom his eyes to the novel show around him, when the financier, transformed into a Jacques Ango (famous merchant of Dieppe who threatened to make war upon Portugal at his own cost, in the reign of Francis I.), accosted, welcomed, and drew him away with Mr. Drydust to the *déjeuner* tent.

There Mademoiselle Angélique was holding her court, amidst a dense circle of worshippers, transfixed with admiration. Flattering murmurs circulated on all hands: Horace himself was fairly dazzled. Certes, the great M. Girth had triumphed. Nothing could have been more beautiful, more enchanting, than this young girl of angelic loveliness, dressed in the graceful disguise of the Rising Sun. Her round white arms were bare, except where glittering bands of jewels encircled them, her rich hair fell in golden cascades over her snowy shoulders, the sun of brilliants that crowned her fair brow blazed like the fiery orb it repre-

sented, and the child herself, intoxicated by the incense of praise, enlivened by the music, the wine, the festivity, the compliments, glowed with an animation which heightened her beauty a hundred-fold.

"You must cater for my daughter," said M. Macrobe, leading Horace forward, and introducing him.

And, noting the ill-concealed look of envy on the countenances of some of the suitors he was then ousting, Horace could not avoid the reflection that, perhaps, indeed he was a man to be envied.

The tent was rapidly filling, for the signal had gone forth that the *déjeuner* was served, and fancy costume is no deterrent to appetite.

Horace led Angélique to one of the numerous tables spread in view of this tardy luncheon or early dinner. He was more or less the cynosure of a group of ladies, not indisposed to flirt with him on the strength of his reputation as a "lion;" but his matchless partner engrossed him, and she, to reward his assiduities, smiled, talked, and occasionally fixed her eyes upon his with a curious expression at once pleased and confiding, which, devoid of fatuity as he was, sent the blood to his head, and caused his heart to palpitate.

M. Macrobe, from whose watchful glance none of these signs, however slight, escaped, smiled to himself with contentment. He was standing with the Prince of Arcola.

"Well, mon prince," he said, "have you forgiven me for taking you to see that pearl of price — that bewitching Mademoiselle Georgette — the other day? I remember you said it was doing an ill-service to show you a face that would inevitably remain fixed in your memory, and, perhaps, trouble your peace."

"Did I say that?" replied the Prince, with an embarrassed laugh. One says those things you know, without meaning them. A handsome statue, a striking picture, creates an impression which one at first thinks lasting, but which wears off."

"To be sure. But Mademoiselle Georgette is a very striking picture; — at least, I know of some one who was considerably smitten in that quarter."

"Who?" asked the Prince, quickly; not noticing that, at this vivacity, which somewhat belied his previous indifference, M. Macrobe's eyelids slightly twinkled.

"That would be telling tales out of school," laughed the financier. "Still, mon prince, as a secret between you and me, the admirer was young Gerold. You know he lives in the same house as this handsome statue."

The Prince changed color a little. It

did not look as though the news much pleased him.

M. Macrobe, to repair matters, took his arm, and presented him to the fascinating daughter of an American citizen, Cincinnati Jickling, Esq., whose ambition was to crown a long career of democracy and drysalting by allying himself to some one with a title. Mr. Jickling was stirred to the depths of his republican heart on seeing Miss Jickling escorted to the breakfast-table by an authentic prince.

Amidst the popping of champagne-corks, the clattering of plate, the running to and fro of sprightly pages, carrying silver trays loaded with choice viands or eccentric-shaped flagons, Horace pursued his attentions to Angélique. When the banqueting was at length over, she accepted his arm, and they issued on to the lawn.

"How refreshing the air is!" she said. "But we must sit down — or shall we go to one of those chalets? They look so nice and cool."

So they turned their steps towards the chalets, which were deserted — the stream of wassailers being directed towards another part of the grounds, where the Tombola was to be drawn.

M. Macrobe, who saw them walk alone, was careful not to disturb them. He had now mated himself with an English dowager — the Lady Margate — who had seen the Eglinton tournament, and was regaling him with her recollections of that historic event. He led off her ladyship, and charmed her with his good-humor, his perfect manners, and admirably-gentle deference. "A most becoming Frenchman," was her ladyship's unuttered verdict. Yet, if M. Macrobe could have divined the motives of his daughter for enticing Horace to the chalet, it is not so sure that Lady Margate would have been captivated by his demeanor. It is probable that he might have earned the reputation of being a very distraught and ill-tempered Frenchman.

As we have said, Angélique had come to the resolution that she would help Georgette. This was the first time in her life that the idea of helping any one — or even the possibility of doing so — had ever occurred to her; but, from the very fact of its novelty, the determination had taken firm hold of all her faculties, absorbing her energies, and monopolizing her thoughts. There are no resolutions so deep as those which have been a long time taking root. She had turned the matter over waking, dreamed of it sleeping, and ultimately had resolved that, cost what it might, she would do such and such a thing on a certain day.

As we must never make men and women braver than they are, perhaps one ought to

own that, at the moment of putting her scheme into execution, she was not a little emboldened by the two or three glasses of Madame Veuve Clicquot's vintage which she had sipped. Anyhow, they were no sooner seated than, with the amazing courage of innocence and inexperience, looking up into Horace's face, she said:

"I am sure you must be very good."

"Good?" replied he, disconcerted. "Are men ever good?"

"Yes, I think you are. I have heard gentlemen speak about you: they said that, though rich, you were a friend of the poor, and gave all your money to them. It seems to me that if I were a man I should like to be like that. I see many gentlemen who pass their lives in trying to amuse themselves: they do not appear to me so happy as you. Only, if I were a man, and anybody loved me I think I should perceive it, and I should not despise the love; for, you see, we women have nothing to give but our hearts, and when we have bestowed that, if we do not get another heart in return, our lives are dark and miserable ever after."

Horace sat, not knowing what could be the meaning of this. Was it a declaration? He felt what is called queer. The incomparable beauty of the girl who was addressing him, the solitude, the strangeness of the situation, all combined to form one of those passes in which precipitate men do foolish things. Luckily his emotion deprived him for the moment of utterance, and thus saved him from ridicule.

"You look astonished," pursued Angélique artlessly; "but what I say is true. Men are strong, and should have pity on the weak. A woman's love may not be much in the estimation of a man, but if they only knew what tears and suffering it costs, I think they would be too generous to leave it unrequited. I know people say that marriages should be between persons of the same rank and having like fortunes: but do you really think this is the only way to become happy? Is affection quite worthless, unless it have armorial bearings on it like one's dinner-spoons?"

Altogether on the wrong tack, and growing much more excited than was prudent, Horace seized Angélique's hand.

"Can you suppose," he said gallantly, "that any sordid considerations would stand in the way of my marrying a woman who gave me her heart?"

She abandoned her hand to him without mistrust; but in a tone of wondering remonstrance; "Then why do you not marry Georgette?" she asked.

"Georgette!" he exclaimed, suddenly releasing her hand.

"Why, yes: of whom else could I be speaking?" replied she simply. "I learned your secret, at least,—it would be truer to say that my aunt and I wrung it from poor Georgette, for she would never have told it us of her own accord. But she is very unhappy, Monsieur Gerold, believe me—so unhappy that I thought I would tell you this, for I said to myself: 'It is impossible M. Gerold can be aware of the pain he is causing.' Georgette is my old school-friend, you know; we were at the convent together; and she was a much better and cleverer girl than I;—oh, yes!—and there is not a nobleman in the world but might marry her without derogating."

The position was perplexing. A man always plays a rather silly part if he has been supposing without reason that a woman is making love to him. Horace felt neither more nor less abashed than most men feel under such circumstances. Yet Angélique, in pleading for her friend, was so naïvely eloquent, her voice bore the accent of so much womanly kindness, that he was touched. Had her design been to win him to herself, by a comedy adroitly played, she could not have succeeded more completely. Perceiving that she had not been thinking in the least about him, he began, with man's unfailing instinct, to think about her.

He hesitated a moment; then, drinking in her truly uncommon beauty with his eyes, he said, "Mademoiselle, my conduct has been misrepresented if you have been told that I have trifled with the affections of the young lady you mention. Had I loved, there are no considerations of rank or fortune that would have dissuaded me from marriage. But to marry without love, or with love existing only on one side, would be folly; and I assure you that until this day my heart was free. "Yes," added he, becoming quite serious, whilst his voice grew more impassioned, "until I came here two hours ago, I never knew what love was. The aims of my life were selfish: they tended to my own advancement only, and I had never contemplated associating any woman with my destiny. But from this day"—and he fixed his eyes with an intent gaze on her—"I have a new ambition,—one that will blend itself with and sanctify all my other aspirations—and this ambition it is you alone that will have the power to fulfil."

He rose, looking at her with a new glance full of love and meaning; and before she, in her surprise and distress, had found a word to say, he was gone.

Whilst this was taking place in the chalet, the world was enjoying itself at the drawing of the tombola, and Mr. Drydust

was explaining to the Austrian ambassador wherein this tombola, which was a plain lottery, differed from the Italian tombolas—an exposition to which her Excellency listened with as much good nature as though her husband had never been civil governor of Milan, and specially occupied during ten years of his life in superintending the Austro-Lombard lotteries. At every moment there was enthusiasm and clapping of hands, as a spirited lady, perched aloft on a platform and turning a wheel-of-fortune, drew out a ticket and proclaimed a prize; which M. Gousset (capital make-up as a court-buffoon), or one of his staff, instantly fetched from behind a curtain and handed with compliments to the owner of the winning number. As a general rule, these lotteries are not a boon. One gets pen-wipers which one doesn't want, or paper-cutters which embarrass one the whole evening; but M. Macrobe had ordained this on the same grand scale as the other arrangements. He had simply invested five thousand guineas in jewellery, and not the least pleasing feature of his triumph was the amazement of his lady-guests, who, examining the lockets or brooches they had drawn, discovered them to be real gold! The sharpest of money-men find it difficult to steer clear of snob-bishness.

But amidst this riot and jubilation a slinking somebody, draped in a Venetian cloak and wearing a black mask, was wandering about looking for the host. As the day was waning, and it was part of the programme that masks should be assumed at dusk, the Venetian-cloaked gentleman soon found his example followed, which appeared to make his researches more difficult, for he more than once stopped and fixed on the wrong man, interrogating him first, and then apologizing. At last he lit upon M. Macrobe, who had just watched his daughter and Horace leave the chalet at a few minutes' interval, both flushed and pensive, and was quietly radiant.

"M. Macrobe," said the mask. "I thought I should never find you."

M. Macrobe started at the voice.

"Is it possible—can it be your Excellency?" he exclaimed. "This is an honor I dared not have counted on."

"Well, well," muttered M. Gribaud—for it was he—"my wife and my daughter were here; you had been good enough—hem—to send them an invitation, so I thought I would just come in like this." He glanced deprecatingly at the cloak that covered his legs, and gave a slight shrug.

"Your Excellency could not have conferred a greater favor—but let me lead you



to the refreshment tent — you must be exhausted."

"No, no, thank you! By the way, if you have a mask, too, it might be as well to put it on; we shall be the less noticed."

M. Macrobe was not sorry to cover his face. Interviews with Monsieur the Minister Gribaud were often severe tests to physiognomical impassiveness. He knew his Excellency well enough to be certain that this unexpected visit was no mere act of amiability, but must have some business motive at the bottom of it.

"I have come because I had something to say on a matter that concerns us both," began the statesman, leading the way to a retired avenue. "You are still getting on well with young Gerold?"

"Your Excellency can see him yonder," answered M. Macrobe, turning. "There to the left, in the *cérise* and white, talking to a lady — *Mdme. de Margauld*."

"Yes, I see him. Humph! how the boy has grown since I knew him. Well, M. Macrobe, you remember the conversation we had some time ago about this young man?"

"Assuredly; and your Excellency must have noticed that the confidence I then expressed was not unfounded. Compare the political attitude of M. Horace Gerold now, and his attitude six months ago."

"He still gives us a great deal of trouble with those newspaper articles of his."

"I did not guarantee immediate results. Your Excellency will recollect my stating that the conversion would need a certain time; yet even in these newspaper articles, you must have remarked a daily increasing moderation."

"Moderate criticisms, M. Macrobe, are not those which give least annoyance," answered the minister phlegmatically. "Still I grant there is a change; what I have now to propose, is an arrangement that may do a great deal at a single stroke. M. Chapoteau, the member for the Tenth Circumscription of Paris, died this morning."

"Which renders a seat vacant."

"Yes, and one it will be difficult to fill as we should like. That poor Chapoteau was a fool, but he made an excellent member. He was elected immediately after the *coup-d'état*, when people were still frightened, and he never gave us a minute's bother. But it would be nonsense hoping to get such a one elected again. People have got over their fright now, and they will be for electing some Radical just to spite us; it's always the same story with these Parisians. However, if you can answer that young Gerold will come over to our side by and by, it might be worth while putting him forward,

and letting him carry the seat, which he might do, popular as he has become."

"But how could the government help him? Horace Gerold would not accept an official candidatureship; neither did he accept it, could he hope to win the seat, for his popularity would collapse on the spot."

"You don't quite follow me," answered M. Gribaud, with some impatience. "My suggestion is, that you should induce young Gerold to stand as opposition candidate. We, of course, shall have our official candidate, and we will do our utmost to get him through; but failing the possibility of that — and I repeat, I don't think it is possible — our agents will receive instructions to give Gerold all the occult assistance they can. And supposing there should be several opposition candidates, and that a *ballotage* should be necessary by reason of the division of votes; then, on the second day's polling, our candidate shall withdraw in Gerold's favor, and so make the seat safe for him. All you will have to do is to prevent the young fellow from entering into any league with his brother opposition candidates."

There was a silence. M. Macrobe mused a moment.

"I will be frank with your Excellency," he said, at last. "I am rather afraid to adopt this plan. If it were certain that within a given time of his entering the house, Horace Gerold would cross over to the government benches, the scheme would be a good one; but I greatly fear that, if once elected as an opposition candidate, he would remain faithful to his party ever after. Gratitude in the first place, and in the next the pride of occupying an absolutely unique position — that of sole liberal member in a house full of Bonapartists — would combine to revive his republican sympathies, and so undo all the work we have been so patiently pursuing of late. But there is another way in which it strikes me this election can be turned to account in bringing young Gerold over more rapidly to our camp." M. Macrobe paused, and threw his eyes round him to make sure there were no eaves-droppers. "We will prevail upon Gerold to stand as opposition candidate, your Excellency; but we must contrive to get his election defeated by the Radicals. Let the government press have orders to combat him courteously; on the other hand, let there be stirred up against him a few of those Radicals who have affinity with the *Préfecture of Police*, and let these fellows be incited to assail him with all the ranting violence and calumnious abuse with which their pleasant vocabulary is stored. They might be licensed

to start a paper, on purpose to attack him, and furnished with the necessary funds. This would disgust Gerold. He is extremely sensitive; he shrinks from blackguardism, and the more signal the courtesy shown him by his Bonapartist opponents, so much the more would he writhe under the low insults of his own party. If he lost his election through their doings, it would be all up with the connection. I should not be surprised to see him snap it there and then, and desert over to us in a dudgeon with arms and baggage."

His Excellency M. Gribaud passed his knotty hand over his chin. The project of M. Macrobe evidently tallied completely with his own ideas as to how an election ought to be carried on under the reign of Universal Suffrage. He saw no flaw in it. He approved.

"The only thing is about the vacant seat," muttered he. "Who will have it?"

"Not unlikely your official candidate," answered M. Macrobe, smiling. "If Gerold breaks with the Radicals he will, probably, resign in favor of the Bonapartists to mark his utter contempt for the party he abandons. Then by this election your Excellency will have killed two birds with one stone — kept the seat in the Corps Législatif for the Bonapartists, and won over a dangerous adversary."

It was some time before these two pillars of the political and financial worlds separated. As their mutual esteem for each other increased by the disclosure of kindred sentiments, they continued to converse, broaching a variety of topics, and taking one another's moral measure. When M. Macrobe was again free, night had set in. Signor Scintilli, the pyrotechnician, had discharged his twenty thousand francs' worth of fireworks — the most goodly blaze ever seen — and the maskers had all retreated from the night-air into the brilliantly-illuminated saloons where the ball was to take place. The financier hurried across terraces and up staircases in his sable gown and gold chain. He was bent upon finding Horace at once, and obtaining from him a promise to stand at the election. Wine, music, and the revelry aiding, it was presumable the young man would be more accessible to the counsels of ambition, more inclined to view his chances with a sanguine eye, than in a soberer mood to-morrow. But first M. Macrobe wished to see Angélique for a single moment, and discover by a passing question whether Horace had committed himself to any proposal.

The ball had commenced, and the financier stood regarding it from the threshold of the room. Everybody was masked, and, as a consequence, everybody was behaving

as he or she would not have done had their features been unveiled. The distinguished plenipotentiary, dressed as a fowl, was kicking his legs in the air in a style that would have secured his immediate ejection from Mabilles. A quadrille composed of official deputies and senators' wives, figuring the devil, a monk or two, some historical dames, and a clown, were going through evolutions, which excited shrieks of interminable laughter from a surrounding ring of noble and illustrious spectators. Mr. Drydust, long ago severed from his claymore, and with his arm encircling the waist of a Russian princess, was performing all his steps Scotch-reel wise, and flinging his manly limbs about him like the branches of a tree, tempest-tossed. M. Gousset had so thoroughly entered into the spirit of his part that one would have taken him purely and simply for one of the loose characters of his own novels. M. Macrobe caught sight of Angélique seated and fanning herself. She had just been dancing with the Prince of Arcola, and, on account of the heat, had for a moment taken off her mask. Her Aunt Dorotheé, utterly unrecognizable and weird to witness as Catherine de Medici, was beside her. Poor woman, she looked like a worthy soul from the upper world fallen by accident into pandemonium.

"Well, my pet, is your card pretty full?"

"O papa, look!" she said. "I don't know how I shall ever keep all these engagements."

In truth, the card was full from the first dance to the twenty-second inclusive. An instant's survey showed M. Macrobe that Horace's name was not down.

"Have you danced with M. Gerold?" he asked carelessly.

Angélique blushed scarlet.

"M. Gerold never asked me," she said, fanning herself more rapidly and speaking shyly.

M. Macrobe knew all he cared to know.

"The courtship has begun," he muttered gayly; and he made for a corner of the room where Horace, easily discernible, though masked, was handing the fascinating daughter of Cincinnatus Jickling, Esq., back to her seat after — as she prettily termed it — "going the pace" with her.

Five minutes later there were two happy men in the room — M. Prosper Macrobe, who had obtained his promise and been thanked into the bargain with a sudden and earnest effusion of gratitude that had surprised him; and Horace himself, who, animated by the whole day's proceedings, the wine, the lights, the dance, was saying, with beating pulse and glistening eye:

"Deputy at twenty-five! I shall not have a fortune to offer her, but I can make myself a name: and then, perhaps, her father will not refuse his consent. That man seems to be my guardian angel."

## CHAPTER XX.

### "LE LION AMOUREUX."

THE presence of the Prince of Arcola in M. Pochemolle's shop — a novel incident on the day when Horace first beheld that nobleman there — had gradually become an event of daily occurrence. M. Macrobe knew what he was about when he brought the Prince to see Mdle. Georgette. The Prince, to his weakness for horses and heraldry, added a third more artistic weakness for women. It was not the weakness of a debauchee, but the highly-cultivated and epicurean worship for what he deemed the fairer and incomparably better half of creation.

The Prince of Arcola was one of those gentlemen who would be all the happier for having some object to their lives. To be sure, he cherished an ambition, which was to win the French Derby, and when he had accomplished that, then the English Derby — but this dream, for the fulfilment of which he relied much more on his trainer's indomitable efforts than on his own, only engrossed his energies in a partial manner, and left him time enough on his hands to feel that the world was occasionally wearisome. He would have liked to possess a large estate had that been practicable; but it was not according to his notions. If he were to begin forming a vast domain, it must be split up at his death and allotted in equal portions to his heirs, whoever they might be: and if there were half a dozen of these heirs, the portion of each would be about the size of an English yeoman's farm. This was beggarly. Had aliens been permitted to hold land in England, he would have got out of his difficulties by emigrating there and founding an estate under the tutelary auspices of primogeniture. As it was, he had more than once turned over the project of getting himself naturalized, only it was the probationary residence under some roof, not his own, which balked him.

Very correct in his attire, cut by an English tailor, shaved à l'Anglaise — that is, sporting mustache and whiskers, but no beard, and irreproachably gloved, he had adopted the habit of driving down to the

Rue Ste. Geneviève in his phaeton to see Horace. But somehow he generally came at hours when his friend was absent: and this furnished a pretext for stepping into the shop below and staying sometimes half an hour, sometimes more. The visit of a prince might be a rather appalling circumstance in the life of a British haberdasher: especially if that prince had a prancing equipage and a groom in livery waiting for him at the street corner; but the shoulders of Frenchmen are equal to any weight of honor. After the first interview or two, M. Pochemolle set down the frequent calls to the pleasure M. d'Arcola probably took in his, M. Pochemolle's conversation. There would be nothing strange in that. M. le Prince and he held, he had observed, identical views on most points. When talking politics, M. Pochemolle said: "We men of order" — implying the solidarity existing between all persons of conservative mind — such as the Prince and himself — as against the disorderly or *canaille*.

That Georgette was not so blind, need hardly be said. As she plied her needle in seeming unconsciousness, the motives of the Prince of Arcola's frequent visits could not quite escape her. At first they importuned her, these visits, and she scarcely opened her lips. But women who have been slighted are wounded in their self-love as well as in their deeper affections, and there was nothing unnatural in the fact that a homage which raised her in her own eyes by proving that all men were not as disdainful of her as Horace had been, should come to be regarded, not with pleasure indeed, but with something approaching to a mild sense of gratitude. She now and then hazarded a timid answer to some of the Prince's remarks, and her mother said she was beginning to look better.

"I am not more fortunate than usual," said the Prince, walking into the shop with a smile, after inquiring uselessly for Horace one afternoon, some five weeks after M. Macrobe's fête. "Madame Pochemolle and Mademoiselle, your servant. M. Pochemolle, why this is seditious literature; are you, too, on our friend's committee?"

"Why, no, mon prince; I was just reading one of the addresses M. Gerold has circulated," responded M. Pochemolle, ruefully, and he displayed an enormous yellow poster, headed: "Dixième Circonscription Electorale de la Seine. Candidature de l'Opposition. Circulaire à MM. les Electeurs."

"I hear the candidature is progressing remarkably well," said the Prince, accepting the seat which the draper hastened to offer him. "M. Gerold has a capital list of names on his committee, all the Orleanist pha-

lanx, Baron Margauld at the head of them."

"And yourself, M. le Prince?" asked Mdme. Pochemolle.

"No, I am not on it, being no free agent; from father to son we must be Bonapartists in our family, but I give good wishes, and anonymous subscriptions."

"Which is what M. Macrobe does, too, I hear," said M. Pochemolle, sighing. "Dear me, M. le Prince, this is a most awkward predicament; I never voted for a Republican in my life, except when they were in power, yet I could never bring myself to vote against M. Gerold."

"Providence has left a door of escape out of every human dilemma, M. Pochemolle. A cold in the head or an attack of gout, are never-failing excuses. M. Macrobe, too, was in difficulty. As Chairman of the Crédit Parisien, and newly-appointed Knight of the Legion, he could not decently have taken open part against the Government. So he labors under the rose, and is most indefatigable. If Gerold gets through it will be mainly owing to him."

"He is a most honest man, M. Macrobe, and the shares of the Crédit Parisien continue to rise every day," said M. Pochemolle.

"I shall be glad to see M. Horace deputy," remarked his wife; "though there will be no reading his speeches in the paper now that the Government prohibits parliamentary reports. He will have a silver-laced uniform, with a sword, and twelve thousand francs a year."

"Supposing he be elected," added the Prince, doubtfully, "but I am afraid it is not so sure. You see how the Radicals are treating him; they have refused to support his candidature; and that new paper of theirs, 'Le Tocsin,' assaults him in a most scoundrelly way."

"Yes, I brought a copy of it home yesterday," grinned M. Alcibiade Pochemolle, who was measuring enough calico to make a petticoat. "They blackguarded him like good 'uns—said he only wanted to get into the House to finger the salary and then turn his coat and betray the party. I never read any thing like it. M. Horace killed that other journalist for much less than that."

"Why should not the 'Tocsin' say all this if it be true?" said Georgette calmly, without raising her eyes from her work. "It is a newspaper's duty to enlighten the public."

This was the first time Georgette had spoken, and her remark was so unexpected, so utterly at variance with the habitual gentleness of her speech, that everybody remained silent-struck. The Prince, who was

seated close to the counter behind which she worked, examined her rapidly, and noticed that her lips were set, that her eyes gleamed, and that her needle-hand, as it stitched with feverish haste, trembled, and often missed the point. She looked up and repeated quietly: "M. Horace Gerold has given no proof that he is better than other men. It seems to me that gold is the only thing for which people care nowadays. For that they would sell their bodies and their souls."

"Georgette!" exclaimed M. Pochemolle, scandalized and frightened; and Mdme. Pochemolle, letting fall her work on the floor, grew red and white by turns.

The Prince, devining some emotion which had found its vent in the impulse of a wild moment, and which doubtless was already repenting having betrayed itself, came quickly to Georgette's relief.

"Mademoiselle speaks in a general way," he said. "She means that electors are so often imposed upon that they may be excused for being a little suspicious. I agree with her, and think that under existing circumstances we may perhaps make special allowances for our Radical friends. They have not a single representative in the House, and they are naturally anxious to get a member who will reflect their peculiar views better than M. Gerold, who, as Mademoiselle says, is as fond as we all are of the comforts and refinements which money procures."

Georgette thanked him by a glance. M. Pochemolle drew a sigh of satisfaction, having swallowed the explanation with entire faith. Mdme. Pochemolle, whether her woman's acuteness accepted it or not, pretended to do so; and thus the Prince was enabled to divert the conversation into a new channel. He had brought tickets for a new play which was making everybody weep at the Théâtre de la Gaîté. If there was one thing Mdme. Pochemolle liked more than another it was to have a good evening's cry over a melodrama, particularly when this satisfaction was afforded her in a stage-box presented by some generous donor.

"And you will go too, Mademoiselle, if you allow me to counsel you," said the Prince, speaking not very loud.

Though she had not yet recovered from the quiverings of her nervous excitement, she answered with more attention than she had ever lent him before: "What is the play about, Monsieur?"

"It treats of a young girl," said he, slowly, and looking at her, "who has been faithlessly abandoned by a man she loved"—

"Yes," continued she, interrupting him, whilst her eye flashed, "abandoned for a

woman who had gold to give. Go on, Monsieur, the story is an old one."

"Another man—of a different character—touched by her condition, pitying, admiring and loving her, offers her his heart"—

"And she?"

"Accepts"—

"I think not, Monsieur le Prince," returned she calmly. "The girl answered that she stood in no need of pity; that admiration is not always a tribute to be proud of; and that for a man to offer his heart to a girl who is not his equal, is but another way of saying that he thinks her fallen lower than she is."



## CHAPTER XXI.

### CANVASSING.

GEORGETTE'S outburst of wrath and abrupt revulsion of feeling as regards Horace were not mere caprice. They were due to her knowledge of what had passed between him and Angélique. In her dismay at the unforeseen climax brought about by her negotiations in favor of her friend, Angélique had at first known neither what to say nor what to do. She had taken four weeks meditating over the matter. Then the conviction had gathered within her that it would be honest to tell Georgette the whole truth; and she had done this, concealing no detail, but setting down every thing as it had happened with the entire conscientiousness and want of tact which distinguishes those "who mean well." From this confession Georgette had had no difficulty in gleaming that if Angélique did not actually love Horace herself, yet his declaration had so far unsettled her that she would have no strength to resist him if he prosecuted his courtship with any thing like insistence. The fact is, Angélique's first essay at diplomatizing had completely exhausted all her powers of initiative. She had laboriously collected all her weak forces for an attack, and had been not only repulsed, but placed suddenly in the position of assailed. She could do no more. If M. Gerold was in earnest in what he said, if he had really set his mind upon marrying her, if, above all, he had her father for an ally, as she somehow suspected he would have, there would be no use in her offering any opposition.

Georgette saw this, and her mild spirit was roused. She would have forgiven Horace for not loving her, and had he

married any brilliant woman of his own rank, rich or poor, from love or ambition, she would have excused him, and borne her wound with resignation. But that he should be aspiring to the hand of Angélique Macrobe revolted her. This match was too sordid. Angélique could have nothing in her but her money to attract such a man as he. She was devoid of sense, her father's reputation was tarnished, their wealth was sprung no one knew whence, and had been publicly denounced as corrupt by Horace himself less than a year before. She felt all her love shrink into scorn for a man who could prostitute himself to such a debasing alliance; the more so as she was humiliated that Angélique, in her clumsy and unauthorized attempts to plead her cause, had probably degraded her in the estimation of this man, whom she now blushed at having worshipped. It is to be remarked that the idea that Horace's affection might be owing to other causes than monetary ones, to Angélique's beauty, for instance, was the only one that escaped Georgette. But this is a venial foible. Women are as much at a loss to discover personal attractions in their rivals as men to perceive talent in their adversaries.

The Prince of Arcola drove home in that state of mind which inevitably follows a "scene" in the case of those who are unused to those incidents. He dined at his club—an English habit which he was helping to acclimatize by his example—and, being alone, had leisure to wonder how much truth and how much comedy there was in Mdlle. Georgette's performance. What puzzled him was the part Horace Gerold had played in all this. He should have been glad to know more of Gerold, who appeared to him a sort of social enigma—a man credited with enormous wealth, and living in the Rue Ste. Geneviève; a Republican whose austere principles were cited, and who danced at fancy dress-balls; a strictly virtuous youth who ravaged the hearts of drapers' daughters. Then whom did Georgette mean by the woman to whom Gerold had sold himself for gold? He thought there would be no harm in trying to elucidate some of these points next time he met Horace. He could ask him frankly whether there had really ever been any thing between him and Georgette, and how far matters had gone.

In the evening, at a party in the Faubourg St. Germain, he stopped Jean Kerjou, the journalist, who was passing in all the glory of swallow-tails and crush-hat.

"It's a while since I have seen you, M. Kerjou. Can you give me any news of Gerold? He is, of course, very busy?"

"You know, mon prince, he is on our

paper now — on the 'Gazette des Boulevards.' Yes, he is up to his neck in election work, and we are toiling by his side. He will have the Orleanist votes, and the Legitimists are not disinclined to support him. Indeed, it is rather for the object of canvassing that I am here this evening."

"Then his worst enemies are the Reds. What can they mean by mauling him so pitilessly?"

"Heigh, it is their nature; but what makes the thing rather hard to stand is, that amongst them are some men Gerold knows and used to be friends with. The Radical candidate who opposes him is that fellow Albi, and one of the writers of that rascally 'Tocsin' is no other than Max Delormay, whom Gerold defended in the libel action. He is not a bad character, but has a soft head — in fact, he is a fool — and I expect Albi corrupted him in prison. Then the 'Sentinelle' has not behaved over well. Gerold counted that it would fight for him, but Nestor Roche has answered somewhat dryly that his principles oblige him to remain neutral; which, under present circumstances, is as good as being hostile."

"Then what do you think?"

"We shall win, I hope; but it will be a tough struggle."

Yes, it bade fair to be that, and an exciting struggle as well. For the first time since the *coup-d'état* a Parisian constituency was to have the opportunity of expressing its opinion with regard to the diversely-appreciated régime Frenchmen were undergoing since 1851. Bonapartists argued that now was the time to prove one's gratitude for the Crimean War, the victories of Alma and Inkermann, the International Exhibition of 1855, the cessation of street riots, the wholesale demolition of old houses, and the unexampled prosperity of trade. The Opposition retorted that here was the moment for asking where France's liberties were gone, what was done with the millions of increased taxes imposed upon the country every year; and, finally, what was the equivalent in dignity, peace, and happiness which the country was deriving from the suppression of its Republic? Paris was the only locality in the whole empire where the elections could be conducted with any independence; and the tactics recommended by the more acute amongst the leaders of the Opposition were formidable. If adopted, the Government could stand no chance against them. They consisted in this: — To bring forward as many candidates of various shades of opposition as was possible on the first day of polling, and to bind them by this common agreement: — That the one who obtained most votes on that *first* day should be left to stand alone against

the official candidate on the *second*, all his brother opposition candidates retiring in his favor — i.e., requesting their electors to vote for him.\*

As soon as it had been published that the seat of the Tenth Circumscription was vacant, a fair array of Oppositionists had entered the lists: a Legitimist count, who had not the ghost of a prospect; an ex-deputy of Louis Philippe's time, who had sat behind M. Thiers, and might be supposed to rally the bourgeois votes; a second ex-deputy, former supporter of M. Guizot; and finally Horace, who, at the cautious solicitation of M. Macrobe, announced himself simply as "Liberal," and whose candidature excited that interest which generally attends youth, courage, and a promptly-won reputation.

Every thing was progressing favorably. That numerous section of Liberals who did not care who was elected provided it were an opponent of the Government, were looking sanguine, and the candidates had already entered into negotiations with a view to forming the desired coalition, when the sudden entry of the Radical candidate on the scene, and his loudly-expressed intention of co-operating with nobody not indorsing his own creed, had completely changed the face of matters. M. Albi, or the Citizen Albi as he called himself, was too popular with the working-class element for the coalition to offer any probability of success without him. The policy to be followed now was not to scatter the Opposition votes amongst the five or six candidates, but to put forward one man whose popularity might out-balance both that of Albi himself and the influence brought to bear in favor of the official nominee. Horace's original competitors were modest enough to perceive that their own popularities were not equal to this double emergency. They admitted that their only chance of entering the House was through the reciprocal system, and therefore they

\* To illustrate this system of tactics, which led to the total defeat of the Government in the Paris elections of 1863, we will take this example: — A constituency contains 35,000 electors. There are 5 candidates in the field, 1 Official and 4 Opposition, the latter comprising 1 Legitimist, 1 Orleanist, 1 Moderate Republican, and 1 Radical. On the first day of polling the 35,000 votes are distributed as follows: Official Candidate, 15,000; Moderate Republican, 8,000; Orleanist, 6,000; Legitimist, 4,000; Radical, 2,000. No one having secured the absolute majority — i.e., the half of the votes *plus* one (17,501) — a second day's poll becomes necessary; but this time, in accordance with their previous agreement, three out of the four Oppositionists retire in favor of the foremost among them; and the result is that the Official Candidate, who, on the first day, headed the poll by 7,000 votes, finds himself completely swamped on the second, the numbers being, Republican C., 20,000; Official C., 15,000. The Imperial Government so much dreaded this strategy that the project of abolishing the system of *ballottage* (second day's poll) was more than once seriously mooted.

had retired at once, leaving the honor of fighting the unequal battle to Horace.

Every thing that could be accomplished by a powerful committee disposing of considerable funds was now done to effect the return of young Gerold, who, bitterly stung by the animosity of his former allies, had plunged into the struggle with a determination to spare nothing to win. He was the man on whom, for the moment, the eyes of all Paris — nay, of all France — were fixed. People were hoping in him by hundreds of thousands — perhaps by millions. Journalists he had never known, whom he was never likely to know, were advocating his cause day after day in terms which made the blood thrill in his veins, and sometimes brought tears to his eyes. He had all the independent journals, both of capital and provinces, behind him. Certes, it was a fine position for a young man who had done nothing. But this very unanimity only made it the more exasperating that the paper he would have most liked to possess on his side — the honest and esteemed "Sentinelle" — had refused to speak a word for him.

"I should not be acting conformably to what I deem my duty as a Republican, were I to recommend you as deputy," had said Nestor Roche coldly in answer to Horace's request. "The most I can do is to remain neutral."

"May I know what is your ideal of a Republican candidate?" Horace replied, speaking with suppressed wrath.

"I doubt whether you would be able to realize such an ideal, even in thought," responded Roche, grimly. "It is not that you dislike Republicanism, but you love other things more."

And Horace had been unable to elicit any thing besides this.

As for Albi and Max Delormay, he had made no efforts to ascertain the motives of their enmity. Albi he had never liked, and Max Delormay was a personage who, ever since his imprisonment, had been haunted by one thought — how to turn his political martyrdom to a good account. Now that he was out of prison, his joining a paper where he was twice as well paid as he had been on the "Sentinelle," was a perfectly natural incident; nor was there any thing very astonishing in his battering suddenly, for wages' sake, at an old friend: journalists are used to these brotherly demonstrations. What did surprise Horace, though, and many others with him, was that Albi, Delormay, and the rest of the set should have found the funds needful to start a paper; and still more, that the Government, which stringently prohibited new journals of moderate liberalism, should

have licensed such a red-dyed, spit-fire organ as the "Tocsin." This last circumstance, taken in conjunction with the relentless, furious war which the Radicals were waging against him, forced him to the conclusion that Government looked upon these men as its surest auxiliaries, and his detestation of their ignoble scurrility became tempered with something very like contempt for, what he was generous enough to consider, their blindness.

Police regulations allowed of no public meetings in which a candidate might address his electors, neither was a personal canvass in a constituency numbering rather more than fifty thousand voters a very practicable expedient. Official candidates got over these difficulties by convoking meetings within covered buildings, such as a theatre or concert-room, stuffing those who came with cake and wine, and then blandly declaring that this was nothing more than a private party; but the success of this stratagem would have been doubtful in the case of liberals. Their only means of making themselves known was to scatter circulars profusely, to go the full length which the Press laws allowed in the matter of newspaper-puffing, and to visit the workshops where a good many hands were employed, and there make brief speeches, if so be that the foremen allowed it.

Horace's committee, of which M. Macrobe appeared to be the life and soul, though he only figured on it anonymously, had undertaken the distribution of the circulars; it disseminated them by cartloads, and not in the Tenth Circumscription alone, but throughout all Paris. It had, moreover, set an army of agents afoot, and a legion of bill-stickers, and a squadron of trusty peddlers who went about the Boulevards hawking cigarette-papers, lucifer-matches, and stationery, in boxes labelled GEROLD, and were often dragged off into custody for their pains. The newspapers launched leader upon leader, paragraph upon paragraph, and printed in flaming capitals on the top of their first columns:

**"VOTE FOR GEROLD — CANDIDATE OF THE LIBERAL AND DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION."**

Some published letters from eminent politicians proscribed by the Empire, letters dated from exile and wishing god-speed to their young successor. Amongst these was one from Manuel Gerold. In a private letter to Horace he had pointed out with emotion and pride how great and unprecedented was the honor which the Liberal party of Paris were conferring upon a man

so young; in his public letter he recommended his son to the suffrages of the electors in the name of those past services for which he himself was suffering banishment, and vouched for Horace's Republicanism and fidelity as for his own. The visits to the workshops were performed by Horace of an afternoon and evening — he gave all his leisure time to them.

Emile accompanied him in these expeditions, and generally Jean Kerjou or some brother writer. The electioneering stirred all Emile's energies into activity. Nothing short of such an event as this could have drawn him away from his books and his briefs, but to further his brother's candidature, he abandoned both book and brief, gave himself up with all his steady power of application to the object before him, and was worth any dozen agents put together. Workmen are always delicate electors to handle. French workmen especially require to be managed with peculiar art, and Emile possessed that art; which, after all, was nothing but sterling sincerity. Where Horace failed to touch the sympathies of his hearers from speaking too much like a fine gentleman, and in language evidently coined for the occasion, Emile arrested their attention at once, and in a few pregnant sentences went to their hearts. They recognized in him a man who felt what they felt; his look, his voice, his gesture, all told it them. More than one sullen brow relaxed under the homely magic of his words, more than one stubborn foe was shaken, and there were days when murmurs of assent broke out, worth twenty salvos of applause. Still, the canvassing in the popular workshops was woefully up-hill work. The candidature of Albi, and the denunciations of the "Tocsin," made havoc of Horace's cause amongst the more excitable spirits; and the neutrality of the "Sentinelle," favorite organ of the artisan quarters, damaged him sorely with the intelligent workmen.

In this manner, five or six weeks flew by, until the day when the writ was issued. This formality precedes the election by three weeks, and in the interval the zeal of both sides redoubles — it is like the final period of training before the day of the race. Bets were being offered on this election, and the odds were in favor of Horace; for people, as usual, judged by the superior noise which his candidature was making. Emile received congratulations, and predictions of success; but he shook his head rather apprehensively: "I wish peace could be made with the Albians," he said; "we have a common foe, and when the enemy is so strong, disunion bodes little good."

This idea preyed upon him, and he had

already turned over to small purpose an assortment of plans likely to operate a reconciliation, when one evening, not a week before polling-day, Horace decided upon canvassing a large workshop where some hundred men were employed in cabinet-makers' work. That day, as it happened, the "Tocsin" had been more than usually vituperative, and honest Jean Kerjou was indignant.

"By Heaven!" he exclaimed, as he walked between the two brothers, "I don't know what withholds you from strangling these curs with your hands. It will be all I shall be able to do to keep my stick off Delormay when I meet him."

Horace said nothing.

"It is infamous, certainly," remarked Emile; "but we had better not strangle anybody. Disdain is as effective, if union be completely out of the question."

"You say 'if,'" cried Jean Kerjou. "Your brother has the patience of Saint Onesiphorus, who received a box on the ear, and begged the donor's pardon for standing in the way. Horace, you don't mean to say you could hold any terms with these vermin? I'd coalesce with the Government against them, and if any of those who voted for them on the first day offered to vote for me on the second, I'd throw their dirty suffrages back into their faces and ask them what the devil they take me for."

They reached the workshop. It stood in a not very savory alley, and was preceded by a dingy court-yard, usually resounding with echoes of wood-planing, grinding of saws, and clanging of hammers. This time it seemed as though the workmen must be absent, for the place was silent, but as they advanced they caught the sounds of an impassioned voice raised as if addressing an assembly; and as all three climbed a dingy staircase, with a greasy wall on the one side and a shaky baluster on the other, a tremendous shock of applause burst like a thunderclap over their heads and a hundred pairs of boots pounded the floor with a din that made the building tremble.

"What's this, I wonder?" exclaimed Jean Kerjou — they were pausing outside the door. "Pon my word, I believe we've actually stumbled on the badgers."

Horace pushed the door and they entered. Jean Kerjou's guess was right.

On a joiner's table, encumbered with tools, and shoved hurriedly next the wall at the end of the room in guise of a platform, stood Albi, his hair dishevelled, his quick, wild eyes glancing fire, and his parched body drawn up in the attitude of one who is taking a moment's breath after a telling oratorical hit. Max Delormay, who had allowed his beard to



grow, and was trying, without much success, to look as if he burned with hatred for tyrants, sat below him, glowering, under a wide-awake; and the body of the hall was filled up with workmen in paper caps and shirt-sleeves, leaning against or sitting upon unfinished articles of furniture, chests of drawers, cupboards and bedsteads. The floor was littered with wood-shavings and glue-pots; broad planks of oak, maple, and rosewood met the gaze; a clean smell of saw-dust and French polish pervaded the atmosphere.

All eyes were fixed upon the new-comers, and a dead silence supervened. Who were they? Albi and Delormay alone winced and changed color slightly. Horace lifted his hat and introduced himself in a few words, amidst a long murmur of curiosity. He concluded by saying: "As you are being addressed by one of my competitors, gentlemen, I will wait and claim the favor of speaking to you in my turn when he has finished."

But this did not suit Albi, who, feeling no desire to have Horace and Jean Kerjou at arms'-length of him whilst he proceeded with the rest of his oration, yelled out at the moment they were moving towards the platform: "This is no place for aristocrats and sycophants."

There was a sensation.

"No," roared he, following up his advantage. "Keep out those men, citizens, who come with smooth words to ensnare your confidence. The poor have suffered enough, I should think, from having put faith in men who betrayed them. If France is bowed down in chains and tears at this minute, it is from having trusted in adventurers. Back! Tell them to go back to their masked balls, their operas — anywhere they please out of the sight of honest workmen whom they and their compeers have reduced to slavery. See! they have nothing to offer you but lying promises, and they quail miserably before your looks. Citizens! what the Workman wants is his lost liberties, his independence, the sovereignty that was ravished from him four years ago when he was off his guard — these men will bring you flatteries; your liberties and your sovereignty, they would not give you if they could."

An ominous murmur rose. It is doubtful whether many there present cared much for their sovereignty, or were even conscious that they had lost it; but Albi spoke with a communicative fervor, his hand was stretched out menacingly, and the three strangers, instead of cowering under his harangue, seemed, on the contrary, both contemptuous and arrogant. Emile, it is true, sought to utter some words of quiet protest; but the Legitimist, Jean Kerjou, thwarted

this endeavor by shouting with fury, "You rascally hound, if all your party were of the same mud as yourself, the ravishing of your liberties was the wisest thing that was ever done, for slavery and dog-whips are the only things you are fit for."

At this there was an immense clamor. "Knock him down!" cried a young workman, with solid arms. "Chuck them out!" chorussed twenty voices more. "Stand back!" roared Horace to an individual who was flourishing a rule over his head, and as the individual only answered with a grin, a crashing blow, levelled straight between the eyes, sent him backwards into the wood-shavings. The rest of the scene was enacted amidst clouds of dust, scuffling, blasphemies, heavy *thuds* of bodies rolled over onto the floor, and finally the opening wide of a door, and the precipitate descent of three persons down the staircase, with a tempest of valedictory howls from behind.

The candidate and his two companions found themselves in the yard, bruised, dusty, torn, but not bloodstained, and minus their hats.

Jean Kerjou felt in his pockets, and discovered that his watch and purse were intact.

"It must have been an oversight of theirs," he remarked quietly.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### VOX POPULI.

At last the day of election dawned — a glorious day of lustrous sunshine — the weather for great events or popular solemnities. Horace awoke with confidence, though pale and full of resentment, for the treatment he had endured in the workshop was ranking in his memory, causing him profound humiliation, mingled with a now burning desire to crush his rivals. The Radicals had attempted to make political capital out of the event, and the "Tocsin" had published a fantastic account of how the "pseudo-liberal" candidate had been expelled with ignominy "by the outraged artisans whom he had sought to cajole." This had led to the instant despatching of two seconds with a demand for a formal retraction, which had been accorded; Max Delormay opportunely remembering the fate of Paul de Cosaque. But neither the fantastic account nor the retraction had done Horace much good. His friends opined that he would have done well to let the attack pass unnoticed, and the "Tocsin"

uttered piercing shrieks at what it called this violation of the liberty of the press by one who termed himself a Republican.

"This weather augurs favorably," said Emile, looking out of the window as the neighboring belfry of Ste. Geneviève chimed nine o'clock.

"Yes, the shopkeepers will not stay at home as they do when it rains," added Jean Kerjou, who had come early. "I have seen more than one French election marred by showers which kept the rain-fearing classes within doors and allowed the tag-rag and bobtail to have it all their own way."

A knock, and M. Pochemolle entered, in his Sunday coat and hat, clean-shaved and most respectable. After much mental tribulation and long doubts as to the course he ought to pursue, he had arrived at the conclusion that as the two votes of himself and his son could not possibly affect the general result in a constituency of fifty thousand, he would generously give them to M. Gerold. So he was now come to say that he and M. Alcibiade, — who, by the way, exercised his civic privilege for the first time — had risen betimes in order to record their suffrages as soon as ever the doors of the Mairie were opened. "And we were certainly the first who voted, Monsieur," added he, with effusion.

"Ay, we were alone in the room with the Mayor and the gendarmes," chimed in M. Alcibiade, whose hair was profusely oiled for the occasion. "What they call the 'urn' is a long box with a slit in it, and when I saw that, I thought I might manage to slip in several voting tickets together — I'd got my pocket full of them — but the mayor didn't allow us to put them in ourselves. It's he who does it."

Another knock, and in sailed M. Filosselle with a new waistcoat of more striking tartan pattern than any before witnessed, and lavender gloves to match. He bowed with ease. He too had been voting, having come up to Paris for the special purpose the night before. "Yesterday morning I was at Marseilles, M. le Marquis, and deep in a negotiation for sending a cargo of cracked bugles to China, where they could pass for new, the Chinese not being musical; but I said, 'Duty before profit,' and here I am. When that sun sets may you be deputy for Paris, then I shall return to Marseilles as pleased as if all the cracked bugles in Christendom had been shipped to Peking, and I had received seven per cent on the commission."

This cheerful commencement to the day removed the cloud from Horace's brow. He dressed himself with care and sallied out with the intention of paying a visit to

the Hôtel Macrobe, professedly to see its owner, really in the hope of meeting Angélique. His interviews with the financier's daughter had not been many since the scene at the fancy fête. Whether it was that she avoided him, or that he was unlucky in his hours for calling, she never seemed to be alone when he was in her company. There was always the Marquis of This or the Count of That, and sometimes beves of ladies engaged in solving grave problems affecting the shape of a bonnet or the length of a skirt. If he could have outstaid these nobles and these ladies — but then M. Macrobe remained or Aunt Dorotheé, which was proper and correct but embarrassing, inasmuch as when she was not actually obliged to take part in the conversation, Angélique sat, resplendent and divine, but silent.

On the election morning, however, M. Macrobe pretexted having a letter to write before going out with Horace to the committee-room. He withdrew; Aunt Dorotheé was up stairs, and Horace found himself for a moment alone with Angélique. It was in the boudoir which the financier had fitted up with such luxury and taste for his daughter. Rare objects of art gleamed on tables and consoles, choice flowers reared their scented heads out of exquisitely-tinted vases. Angélique's beauty shone with greater radiance amidst these surroundings, like a peerless jewel out of a costly setting. She was dressed in white, and wore a single rose in her hair. A glancing sunbeam fell upon a curl that rested on her shoulder and made it glisten like spun gold.

As the door closed behind her father she blushed and rose, feigning to examine a scarlet jardenia. Horace approached her with emotion.

"Will you let me offer you a flower?" she said, as if to ward off words which she expected yet shrank from, and she broke off the finest sprig. But, as soon, she clasped her hands, blushed deeper, and said, "But no, I am forgetting that this is the day of your election and I am offering you the color of your adversaries — those bad men who, they tell me, say such cruel things."

"And does it pain you that bad men should say such cruel things? But give me the flower, it has a price now that you have culled it."

He took it from her hand and fixed it in his button-hole. She continued to gaze at the jardenias, but found nothing more to say; so he gently drew her hand in his and murmured: "Do you know why this day is so anxious a one in my life? It is because it may prove the starting-point to a career

of honor which I shall lay as my only fortune at the feet of her I adore—at your feet.”

She turned to him with blushing and almost piteous entreaty.

“Oh! why do you say that to me, M. Gerold, when Georgette is so much better and worthier of you than I?—You, who are a famous man, who will become a great one, require a partner who is clever and can aid you. I could not do that—I know I could not—and I should make you unhappy, however much I tried to do otherwise.”

“I do not want a partner who would aid me by cleverness,” answered Horace, softly. “There is a help more potent than that to brace the nerve and smooth the path of man, and that help you could give if you tried to love me a little. Promise me that and you will make me more than happy.”

Her bosom heaved, and in her trouble she could only falter:

“If it were really for your happiness, M. Gerold; but it is not. Oh, I feel it is not! But, tell me, did you never, never love Georgette?”

This question, which revealed the first timid germs of feminine sentiment, transported him. He pressed her hand to his lips: “Never,” he said, decidedly; “never.”

Footsteps resounded outside. Instinctively they drew apart.

“Now then, my dear young friend, I am at your service,” said M. Macrobe, returning. “My child, make your best courtesy to M. Gerold, who, before you see him again, will be the most enviable man in France.”

Elections in France under the Imperial system were not the noisy and boisterous events they are in certain other countries. Although this election was regarded with mortal anxiety by a full million of French Liberals, who watched in it for the first feeble symptoms of independent revival, the streets showed little or no signs that any thing unusual was taking place. It was a Sunday, as French polling-days always are; the church-bells rang, citizens, with glossy hats on their heads and smart wives on their arms, were trooping to the Bois de Boulogne or to the railway stations to catch excursion trains; and there was the customary sprinkling of soldiers in dress uniforms, some of whom to be sure, stopped and stared a moment at the yellow, red, and white candidate's addresses glaring on the dead walls. But this was all. It was only in the quarters comprised in the 10th Circumscription that any electoral movements could be witnessed, and even here the proceedings were of the simplest character. The Circumscription was divided

into twelve sections, and in each one of these was a polling-place provided by the Municipality—that is, a room hired on the ground-floor of some eligible house decorated for the occasion by a tricolor flag. Anybody was free to enter these rooms on condition of standing quiet. They contained two gendarmes, a deal-box with a slit in the lid, a table, and behind the table a half-dozen gentlemen, delegates of the Mairie and of the different candidates, seated on chairs. The electors came up one by one, handed their voting tickets folded to the municipal officer, who dropped them at once through the slit, and then retired in silence. No shouting, no cheers, no party cries. Outside some touters distributed voting papers to new-comers, and knots of two or three electors loitered in the roadway discussing the prospects of the candidate they favored. But these groups were never allowed to congregate into crowds. A couple of *sergents-de-ville* paced watchfully up and down, saying, “Circulez, messieurs, s'il vous plait, circulez.”

Horace's committee-room was in a street not very far from the Rue Ste. Geneviève. When he drove up to the door with the financier he found the nearest approach to a throng that he had yet seen that day, and a good many hats were lifted as he alighted—one or two hands even pressed forward to shake his. Inside, the room was crowded with Horace's friends and with newspaper reporters come to pick up the latest news. The “Gazette des Boulevards” mustered in great force, so did Mr. Drydust, who had brought a youthful British peer with him, the Viscount Margate, and was describing to his lordship the mechanism of universal suffrage both amongst that and other peoples. A shout arose as Horace darkened the doorway, and fifty voices were raised to announce to him the results of the first four hours' polling, as gathered approximately from the ticket-distributors at the different sections:—

Gerold . . . . .	2,300
Bourbatruelle . . . . .	1,200
Albi . . . . .	450

There might not be much in these figures, for a large number of electors came with their voting tickets in their pockets and did not accept those proffered at the doors; still they sent a flush to the face of the triumphant candidate. Mr. Drydust declared aloud that they must be taken as conclusive, the numerous elections he had seen having invariably been decided by the results of the first four hours' polling.

M. Bourbatruelle was the official candi-

date. It was not very easy to elect a personage suited to this delicate post in a city such as Paris, and under the circumstances, M. Bourbatruelle was really not a bad choice. He was a manufacturer of clay-pipes. Every clay-pipe in Paris issued from his stores bore the name of *Bourbatruelle* printed in small letters next the mouth-piece. On bringing him forward, the Government had suggested that it would do no harm to print this name of BOURBATRUELLE a little bigger, to prefix the words VOTE FOR, and to disseminate a hundred thousand clay-pipes, thus amended, gratis amongst the population. M. Bourbatruelle had improved upon the hint by causing screws of shag to be bestowed along with the pipes—which was not bribery, although it might have been deemed so had M. Bourbatruelle been a Liberal, but simply a small token of affectionate generosity. There was a general impression current that M. Bourbatruelle was a fool—an erroneous idea, for a man is not a fool who can make himself a millionaire by selling clay-pipes. If the Corps Législatif were ever called upon to pass a law affecting the pipe-industry, every thing tended to show that M. Bourbatruelle would prove himself thoroughly competent to defend his interests. Of course, as regards laws that had no connection with pipes, M. Bourbatruelle was indifferent, and was expected to be so, for had it been otherwise he would not have been chosen for official candidate.

M. Bourbatruelle had behaved like a gentleman towards Horace, leaving a card upon him, and bowing to him with great civility once when they had met in the street. Horace had followed suit in the matter of the card, and returned the bow with respect. He had no animosity for M. Bourbatruelle, and it gave him keen pleasure to see that he was completely distancing Albi.

"I see every hope of our obtaining the victory, M. Gerold," said the grave and emphatic Baron Margauld. "Madame de Margauld has charged me to convey to you her good wishes. I think she has been not unoccupied in canvassing for you among some of her friends."

"I am most grateful," answered Horace earnestly, "and whatever be the result of the election, believe me I shall never forget the kindness that has been so freely lavished on me."

Jean Kerjou ran in breathless.

"I have just come from the section of the Rue de Tournon. Emile came there to vote, and brought ninety-two workmen with him—all rabid supporters of Albi. He had talked them over. Ah, you should have heard him! You've got a brother there who is not made of ordinary stuff. If

he had time to go the round of all the workshops by himself to-day, you would fly to the top of the poll like a flag to the masthead."

The voting begins at eight in the morning and concludes at six, and it is from this latter hour that the real excitement of a Parisian election commences. But the centre of animation is not so much in the voting quarters as on the Boulevards. On those three hundred yards of holy ground between the Opéra Comique and the Théâtre des Variétés every man flocks who holds a pen or a pencil, who may wear a gown or an epaulette, who is anybody or any thing—journalists, artists, barristers, officers, novelists, stockbrokers, all jumbled together, smoking, chattering, gesticulating, and waiting for the evening papers. At half-past six on the evening of the election you could not have dropped so much as a pea from the balcony of one of the houses of the Boulevard Montmartre without its alighting on the hat of somebody. The crowd surged rather than flowed. The cafés were crammed to suffocation—not a seat to be had in them.

The lamp-lighters, with their long ladders, found themselves unable to make any head against the current, and appealed distractedly to be allowed to pass. In the kiosks, the newspaper-women, worn out with counting money and folding broadsheets, had hung out the announcement which is their signal of distress: "No change given." And amidst all the din, the clinking of glasses in the cafés, the rattling of dominoes on the marble tables, the cries of "*Oui, Monsieur; tout de suite,*" from the waiters, snapped the exclamations, "Gerold wins!" "I'll lay on Albi: they say the Radicals polled in the afternoon." "I vote an address of condolence to Bourbatruelle."

Of a sudden, a tremendous rush. A string of newsboys were coming full tilt down the Rue Montmartre, metropolis of printers, with the second edition of the "*Gazette des Boulevards.*" They are mobbed. The kiosks are stormed. A deluge of copper coin ensues—those who have no sous give francs, and the papers were torn open:—

#### "LATEST NEWS.

"At the moment of going to press with our second edition, the results of the election are still uncertain; but the contest has been a very severe one. Until two o'clock the Liberal candidate maintained the head; but the majority of electors did not poll till late, and it is now supposed that the votes are so equally divided that a 'ballotage' will be necessary. The greatest order prevails."

Ten minutes later the second edition of the "Sentinelle" appeared, and was cleared away in two minutes :—

**"ELECTION OF THE 10TH CIRCUMSCRIPTION."**

"The votes are being counted as fast as possible in the different sections, and it is now beyond doubt that the Government have sustained an overwhelming defeat, the aggregate of votes given to the two Opposition candidates amounting to almost double the number polled by the Official candidate. M. Horace Gerold's committee are sanguine; but at M. Albi's head-quarters it is confidently asserted that the immense majority of votes polled in the afternoon were for the Radical interest. We have no means of ascertaining how far this rumor is correct."

Finally, at about eight, an impossible, indescribable scrimmage greeted the third edition of the "Tocsin," brought damp from the press by men wild with excitement, and shrieking: "*Final Result!*"

This is what the "Tocsin" printed:—

**"CLOSE OF THE POLL.  
TRIUMPH OF THE RADICAL CANDIDATE."**

*10th Circumscription.*

Number of Registered Electors,	51,515
Number of Votes recorded,	45,963
Absolute Majority required,	22,982
ALBI . . . . .	19,310
BOURBATRUELLE . . . . .	14,518
GEROLD . . . . .	12,125

None of the candidates having obtained the absolute majority, a 'ballotage' will take place this day fortnight."

This news was brought to Horace in his committee-room, and he managed to glide out unperceived amid the consternation and tumult which it occasioned. He had not eaten since the morning, excitement having left him no appetite, and he now felt faint; his steps were hurried and unsteady. People passed him with contented faces, returning home after their Sunday walk; and how he envied those people, who probably led uneventful lives and had no ambition! In a quiet street an Italian was grinding an organ, and a ring of little children danced around him, filling the evening air with their gay, crowing laughter. He rather wondered that these children did not read on his face how disappointed and unhappy he was, and pause in their merry-making; but he tried to smile to them kindly, and he thought the music the sweetest, most pathetic he had ever heard. When close to his lodgings, he stopped, remembering Emile. His brother would take this to heart more

than he himself would. He must go in looking unconcerned, cheerful, if he could; he rehearsed one or two things which he could say to console Emile. And so he reached Rue Ste. Geneviève.

But just as he was about to cross the road opposite M. Pochemolle's house, he was arrested by a loud and jubilant clamor proceeding from the end of the street, and a joyous crowd debouched uttering shouts of triumph, and escorting a man perched high aloft on a pair of stalwart shoulders. It was Albi's constituents chairing him from his committee-room to his home. The police had made some sort of effort to prevent it, but they were too few, and the men too many—something like a couple of hundred; besides which, the procession was only noisy, not obstreperous, so that it was best to let it alone. On they came, cheering with all the power of their lungs, and tossing their caps into the air; and the inhabitants, attracted by this sight of by-gone times, came out on to their doorsteps, to look and nod, and clap their hands; success excites applause, like sunshine the song of birds. Horace remained standing where he was, motionless; but just as the exulting troop approached, a window facing him was opened, and Georgette appeared. She looked out and saw him at once. He was standing in the full light of a gas-lamp—she at an angle where her features were plainly visible—and their eyes met. Rapid as lightning she darted on him a look of contempt and derisive triumph, and at the moment when the vanquishers swept beneath her, leaned forward, caught up a nose-gay that was standing on the sill, and threw it to Albi.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### MACROBE À LA RESCOUSSE.

To have been during three months the most prominent man in one's country, to have dreamed of becoming, at an age when others are subalterns, the unique representative and leader of a party that numbered the best, wisest, and greatest men of France—and to find one's self suddenly fallen again to the position of writer on a second-rate newspaper, was bitter enough. But what redoubled the chagrin and mortification of Horace was the way in which his supporters of yesterday—the journals that had been his champions—hastened to desert him and passed to the side of his rival. So long as it had been a question of choos-

ing between two candidates — one an educated gentleman, the son of an illustrious patriot, and a proved Liberal like Horace; the other, a darksome and not over well-known Revolutionist like Albi — the moderate, enlightened organs of public opinion had not hesitated. But now that the ultimate lay between taking the official candidate or having Albi, the issue was changed. After all, Albi was a Liberal, he would not vote as the other two hundred and sixty members in that servile, voiceless chamber. He would raise his cry on behalf of proscribed freedom; he would protest against the laws of tyranny passed in the name of France. It was absolutely necessary that the Opposition should have, at least, one spokesman; and the liberal journals unanimously called upon Horace Gerold to retire in Albi's favor. To make matters worse, Emile, though he did not verbally urge this course, implied by his manner that he desired its adoption; and Manuel Gerold, writing from Brussels, spoke of it as imperative — as a thing that did not even admit of discussion. "The life of a public man," he wrote, "must be one of self-sacrifice. Personal ambition, predilections, rancors, must all sink before considerations of public good. This man was your enemy yesterday, to-day you must be his ally; else your electors would have the right to think it is yourself you wished to serve, not them."

To resign in favor of Albi, to further the return of a man who had pursued him with uncalled-for spite, marred his own certain triumph, and who, had the positions been reversed, would never have given way to him — having vowed not to do so when he started — this was an act of magnanimity which demanded superhuman courage. Horace blanched at it; it chilled his heart to think of. Nor did his judgment incline to it readily; for was not this man a malicious, serpent-tongued slanderer — had he not shown himself both tortuous-minded and unscrupulous, and was it to be supposed that the Liberal party could be benefited by having such a personage as that for its representative? In his perplexity he sought the Hôtel Macrobe, as much to cheer himself after his cruel deception by a look at and a word from Angélique, as to ask counsel of the financier whom he was beginning to look at as his mentor. But, as though all creation were conspiring against him, neither Angélique nor her father were at home. So he walked back sorrowfully and betook himself to the society of his friends of the "Gazette des Boulevards," the only paper which had remained faithful to him, and whose advice, as conveyed energetically by Jean Kerjou, was

"not to abet the entry of a blackguard into Parliament."

M. Macrobe was not at home, because closeted in private conversation with M. le Ministre Gribaud. This time the financier was subjected to no ante-room delay as at his last audience. On his arrival the venerable Bernard had saluted him to the ground, and ushered him at once into the Minister's presence, and M. Gribaud had motioned to him with his finger to take a seat.

"Well, M. Macrobe," began his Excellency, rather sourly. "It seems we've overdone it."

"I certainly thought the official candidate would get through, your Excellency. It never entered my thoughts that this man Albi could make such a hit."

"Nineteen thousand votes, and twelve thousand given to young Gerold; thirty-one thousand Oppositionists in one constituency! Ah! how right we are to keep the curb well strained; how quickly this devil-city would overturn us if we let it! But now what is to be done? Albi of course will not retire; but will Gerold do so in favor of our man, as you predicted?"

"Things have not turned out as I had planned," answered M. Macrobe, with his brows knit. "I had counted that the two rival candidatures would divide the Opposition votes and allow the Government nominee to get in easily; but then I had not foreseen that the Opposition was so strong. As for Albi, we have no hold on him. He came forward on the understanding that his expenses should be paid and that he should have the funds to start a paper. It was necessary to find a name which would rally a certain number of Radicals; but I imagined that he would get ten thousand votes at the most, and that when he had served our purpose we could simply let him drop and suppress his journal. But, for the present, it would not be safe to try this. He does not know that it is the Government who have brought him forward; he fancies it is a Radical Committee, and if this committee were to play him false at such a moment, just as he was on the point of succeeding, he would suspect something and denounce it aloud; for though he be a vicious, venomous brute, he is no traitor. No, he must never learn that the committee under whose orders he has been acting is composed of men in the pay of the Prefecture, and that all his contributors on the 'Tocsin,' with the exception of that simpleton Delormay, draw their inspirations from Ministerial source. The scandal would become public and injure the Government. What we must do is to defeat Albi on Sunday week; then the committee can say

that, his election having failed, they see no use in continuing the paper, and withdraw their caution money. But first we must beat the man, and now there remains but one way to do that; only one."

"Which? If young Gerold will retire in favor of Bourbatruelle we might manage. There cannot be much love lost between him and the 'Tocsin' I should think." And his Excellency chuckled a little.

"No, there is not. He hates Albi, ten times more than he ever hated the Government, and if left alone would throw the Radicals overboard without much parley. But he is influenced by his brother—a young prig—and by his father, so that although I should not actually despair of bringing him to coalesce with us, yet the thing would require an effort and more diplomacy than it would be worth. I say more than it would be worth, because it is not so sure that even if Gerold did resign in Bourbatruelle's favor, all his electors would obey him. The unexpected lead taken by Albi has roused the hopes of the Opposition. All their papers are now backing Albi, and supposing that out of Gerold's twelve thousand electors, eight thousand were to vote for the official candidate, and four thousand only for the other man, Albi would still win. I suggest, your Excellency, that the man who should withdraw is M. Bourbatruelle. His supporters would naturally poll for Gerold whether they were asked to do it or not, and these fourteen thousand votes would beat the Radicals out of the field."

"And Gerold; how will he behave when he is in the House? You were not encouraging on this score last time we talked the matter over."

"True, your Excellency; but the conditions are altered. If Gerold had been elected as an Opposition candidate, he would have given us trouble, but if he gets in now, he will readily perceive that he owes it to the Conservatives. The affair, however, must be managed with tact. Let Monsieur Bourbatruelle withdraw without recommending his electors to vote for anybody. The majority of the opposition press, deeming that Albi, with his nineteen thousand original votes, has the best chance, will probably continue to support him; the Government press, on the contrary, will take up Gerold's colors, and this will serve to widen the breach which the first day's poll has made between the Liberal candidate and the Radicals. Once in the House, the conviction that he is virtually representing a constituency of Bonapartists and temperate Liberals will keep Gerold within bounds. He is not likely to forget the party that opposed him so ruthlessly, and he will feel

proportionate gratitude for the men who secured his triumph. A little courtesy and tolerance on the part of his colleagues will do the rest. But if the worst comes to the worst—I mean, if Gerold proves unmanageable—he need not remain in the House more than a year. We are in 1856; in another twelvemonth come the general elections."

His Excellency M. Gribaud rubbed his left ear thoughtfully, then cracked the joints of his tough fingers.

"Well, we will try your plan," he said, slowly. "It's rather like admitting a young wolf-cub into a sheep-fold to put this Gerold into the Corps Législatif; but perhaps the cub's teeth are a bit blunted. I will send for Bourbatruelle at once. We shall have to give him something. H'm, the Legion of Honor will do. Then we shall have to pay his expenses. By the way, Gerold has not got a *centime*, of course; and I suppose you've not found out what he and his father do with their money? I learn from the sub-prefect at Hautbourg that charitable donations are sent by them every quarter-day; but the town complains that it is ruined, root and branch."

"Better days will perhaps come for it," answered M. Macrobe, laconically.

"Yes, if you succeed in your rôle of General Monk."

"Who is General Monk, your Excellency?" asked M. Macrobe; for, though an astute financier, his historical education had been neglected.

"General Monk was a shrewd fellow who restored a penniless young king to his estates and then helped him to govern them," said M. Gribaud, grinning broadly.

A slight tinge of color came to M. Macrobe's parchment countenance, but he laughed.

"Well, I hope he was well repaid, your Excellency."

"Oh, yes! it was a good speculation, as you gentlemen of the Bourse say." And, continuing to grin, M. Gribaud took up his pen and indicted a line to M. Bourbatruelle, the clay-pipe manufacturer. "This will do the business," he said; "but mind, Monsieur Macrobe, I am acting now in deference to your judgment, and we shall regard you in some way as surety for this young fellow's good behavior."

The financier made an obeisance, and, the audience being now terminated, withdrew.

But he did not go straight off to Horace to hold out the plank of safety which he had just hewn out for him. Events had marched fast, but the time had come for accelerating them, if possible. Horace Gerold had entered the net, the meshes must now be

closed upon him rapidly; he must be brought to propose for Angélique, to break with his party, and to place himself in M. Macrobe's dependence, all at one swoop. This could be effected by leaving him to his misery for these next few days. He must be left to drink to the dregs the cup of his humiliation — to chafe and writhe under his abandonment; and then, when all the world seemed bitterness and deception to him, his future father-in-law could step in like a *deus ex machina*, smooth away his troubles, and send him careering once more on the high-road to glory. So M. Macrobe merely wrote a line to request Horace not to take any steps as to retiring until the following Sunday — seven days before the second ballot — when his committee would consider the subject, and by the same post he arranged that M. Bourbatruelle's retirement should also be held in suspense until the same date. This done he sent Mlle. Angélique into the country with her aunt for a day or two, and took an easy opportunity of having Horace informed by a third person that this young lady was being wooed by the Prince of Arcola, and would probably soon be asked in marriage by that nobleman. "If he really loves her," argued M. Macrobe, "this will make him miserable and furious; if it be a mere inclination, jealousy will stimulate it, and, no doubt, fan it into something warmer."

Thus the week passed by. The posters with Albi's name were renewed on the wall; the "Tocsin" gloated over its victory and reviled the conquered; the chorus of journals which besought the Liberal candidate to do his "duty" swelled every day, and Horace himself was as thoroughly galled, distracted, and despondent, as can be imagined.

On the Sunday he paced his room in an agony of doubt, trying to form a resolution, yet not daring to take it.

"I don't see that there's any thing to hesitate about," grumbled royalist Jean Kerjou, who was embedded in an arm-chair and puffed solemnly at a cigar. "The moral sense of this generation seems to be blunted. What! Here is a cur whom you would not admit into your back-kitchen, and half the newspapers of France are laying their heads together to plan how they may foist him upon an assembly of gentlemen! God bless the days when there were no parliamentary institutions to make such tricks look excusable in the name of party tactics. Heaven bless the times when there existed a freemasonry between gentlemen to send rogues to Coventry, and when fellows like Albi were shunned like the pest."

"It's not the man we should be helping into the Corps Législatif, but his principles," answered Horace feebly.

"Oh! his principles, my dear M. Gerold," exclaimed Arsène Gousset, laughing. He had come with a dainty-looking volume of somewhat improper poems — his composition — which were being much read in fashionable spheres, and which he desired the "Gazette des Boulevards" to handle tenderly. "What principles do you think those men have, except this immortal one, to turn out every man that holds a place, and to put themselves in his stead? You will say he is a Republican; but so is every man who has not a *centime*, and sees no chance of ever possessing one. And this is no more a title of honor than to say that his trousers are ragged, his washerwoman's bill unpaid, and that he dines off boiled beef, not being able to afford venison. The rich and educated who join this band are either perspicuous citizens who want to climb the political ladder quickly, and know that there is no better stepping-stone for their purpose than the heads of the unwashed; or amiable enthusiasts, like your father, who would govern wolves with kind words, and jackals with forms of logic. As soon as these excellent theorists get into power, they begin by locking up the dog-whips, chains, and collars. They proclaim the liberty of howling; and a few weeks after they are howled out of office — as your father was. The fact is, the doctrine of Republicanism starts from the assumption that, however ignorant and brute-like an individual member of the lower orders may be — and that he is both ignorant and brute-like is sufficiently proved by our interminable schemes for educating and refining him — yet, that a few millions of such individuals, putting their ignorance and brutishness in common, become a class full of sense and virtue, both worthy and competent to rule; which seems to me like contending that, although one of the jackals above-mentioned, lean and ravenous, might be a danger to the poultry-yard, yet that a good big troop of such jackals turned loose together among the hen-coops would show the world what abstemiousness was, and extend a brotherly protection to the fowls. I should like to get a Republican candidly to acknowledge — but they never will do so — that Republicanism, as we understand it nowadays, has never existed anywhere, and when tried has eternally broken down. Greece and Rome were aristocratical oligarchies, in which all the lower orders were slaves. It was much the same thing at Venice, Genoa, and in Holland. Republican in name, virtually close vestries, in which no man was admitted to power who



had not a square cash-box to recommend him. In South America, democratic Republicanism — considerably diluted, however, by the slavery of the negroes, who do all the servile work — has been on its trial nearly half a century, and has resulted in a revolution every twelve-month. There have been in Chili since the independence, something like twenty *coups-d'état*, in Peru rather more. In Mexico the people change their executive as they do their shirts. As for the United States — where again we find the negroes, who represent the proletarian classes of Europe, kept under heel — Republicanism has hobbled along hitherto there because the country, not being half peopled, there is land, like air and water, for all comers; and the subversive gentlemen who in Europe swarm in our large cities, and overturn our governments for us, go out into the West and found states of their own, where liberty, equality, and fraternity flourish under the shade of the bowie-knife, the revolver, and the bludgeon. But in a few hundred years hence, when the descendants of these squatters begin to wash their hands and fence in their properties, when there is not a rag more land to distribute to immigrants, and when it becomes a question of providing for several million paupers, I doubt whether apostles of the Albi school will be more appreciated in American upper circles than they are with us. State prisons and gibbet-trees will be erected on their behalf, as they have been in this land. Persecutions, revolutions, and re-actions will succeed one another like a rotation of crops, and the States will pass through their cycle of monarchies even as the rest of the world has done. You see, there are certain orders of things you will never be able to reconcile, and amongst these is the empty stomach and the full one. To the end of time, the man who has not dined will be the foe of the man who has; and the history of revolutions is but that of the alternate triumphs of these two over one another. To-day it is Gribaud and Company who dine, to-morrow it may be Albi and Brothers. Only, to think that Albi Brothers have any object but to get this dinner, or that, if they once had the keys of the State larder, anybody, save themselves, would be the better for it, is one of those bright fallacies that denote a cheerful contempt for the lessons of history. Revolutions never abolish abuses — they only change them. We have gone through three bloody revolutions, and four changes of dynasty, to set over us M. Gribaud, who presses as heavily on mankind as ever did the Duc de Choiseul, or the Marquis de Maurepas; a fourth revolution would give us M. Albi. Upon

my word, I consider things are very well as they are; the change would be insignificant in so far as results went, and it would cost money, to say nothing of comfort."

The Court Novelist emitted all this in his most lively tone of bantering persiflage, blowing wreathing clouds of smoke towards heaven, and stroking his carefully trimmed yellow beard with a hand on which glittered an enormous diamond, the gift of an empress. But his paradoxes did not offer any solution to Horace, and when, at length, he smilingly withdrew along with obdurate Jean Kerjou, whose parting words were to "fight till grim death, as my Breton countrymen do," Horace began striding up and down as before, but more harassed, vacillating, and moody than ever.

"Duty!" he exclaimed, bitterly, "what do men ever gain by performing it?" and he thought of Georgette and her unfeeling insult on the evening of his defeat. It was an insult the more cruel as he was unable to divine the motive of it. He had been wrong in flirting with Georgette; he had felt this, and retreated before it was too late both for himself and for her. But was this the way to be revenged on him? When he met her by chance, she glared upon him with the eyes of a little tigress, or, what was worse, treated him with undisguised, aggressive scorn, as if he were some abject criminal. She was not even content to trust to fortuitous occasions for making him feel her spite. One evening, returning home, he had found the work-box which he had given her lying on the table, and not a word of explanation with it, not a line to mark what she was offended at, or what he might do to soothe her resentment away. She was behaving without any sense or reserve. Had she been a misguided girl quarrelling with her paramour, she could not have acted otherwise; for, after all, he had given her no direct cause for offence. His sins, if sins they were, had been of a negative kind. He had left off seeing her because he wished to conduct himself as an honest man; and when, after a long interval, he had ventured upon entering the shop again, he had found the Prince of Arcola there. And this had recurred several times: more than once when he had passed the shop latterly, he had seen either the Prince himself or his well-known phaeton waiting at the corner of the street.

At this recollection of the Prince of Arcola his brow grew black.

M. Macrobe had not misreckoned on the emotion which the report of Angélique's marriage would cause him. The news had gone into Horace's heart like a knife. Coming at such a moment, when the cup of his mortification was already brimming, it was

a savage sort of blow. It put him roughly back in his place, showing him what a poor devil he definitely was, and how extravagant was the pretension for one such as he to espouse a millionaire's daughter. Till that moment he had never reflected on Isidore Macrobe's wealth in connection with Angélique; but he did so now, and measured at a glance the distance that separated him — him, a struggling journalist and barrister—from the brilliant Prince of Arcola. So this Prince was destined to thwart him in his love, as that man Albi was doing in his ambition! At the outset of his career, he was to be stopped dead short by a dandified sportsman and a ranting demagogue; nay, more, he was asked in the name of duty to connive in this result! Angry and pale, he swore this should never be. He had torn himself away from Georgette, that she might be respectably married and never know trouble; and what was the consequence? She despised him for his pains, and coquetted with a Prince whose intentions towards her were clearly what those of most other men of easy morals would be in such a contingency. Now, people were soliciting him to make a new sacrifice, in order, no doubt, that Albi might laugh at him in his turn and take him for a credulous simpleton. No, no; as Jean Kerjou said, this was a case for fighting till the end. He would tell the Prince that a libertine, titled though he were, was no fit husband for Angélique; and if the Prince resisted, why there were means of settling these questions, in France, without much loss of time or words. As for Albi, committees or newspapers, friends or foes, might say what they pleased — if he could prevent that fellow from succeeding, he would do so; and if he could not, it should, at least, not be said, that it had been for want of the trying.

Whether by accident or design M. Gousset had wrapped his pretty volume of improper poems in a number of the "Tocsin," and there they lay both on the table together, the improper fashionable book, and the improper democratic gazette. Horace suddenly caught sight of the journal, and, full of his new resolution, snatched it up and ran his eye over the leading article; as usual, an attack on himself, written by Albi, not without talent, but in a style of violence positively reeking with hatred and injustice. It was one of those infamous articles which are intended to stab deep, and which do stab, however steeled we may be against them by usage. Horace flushed all over as he read it. He crushed the sheet in his hand, and darting to his desk, penned a letter to the chief of the independent journals who were calling on him to retire.

He was so intent upon his work, his pen flew so rapidly over his paper, that he remained unconscious of the presence of M. Macrobe, who having knocked without eliciting an answer, had opened the door and glided in. When he had dashed off his signature, he looked up, gleaming.

The financier's eye was mutely interrogative. Horace handed him the letter without speaking.

M. Macrobe perused it with a nod.

"So far so good," he said, "this will do as a beginning; but men like you must do more than talk, they must conquer. You would not be sorry to crush this Albi?"

Horace's eyes glistened, and he waved his hand — an eloquent gesture — it meant, "Give me the chance."

"Then the day is yours," said M. Macrobe. "I have come to tell you that M. Bourbatruelle retires; you will remain face to face with Albi; but as you will have the votes of all the honest people who, thank Heaven! are a majority, your return is assured."

Horace rose to his feet; it seemed to him in that moment that the room swam.

"Yes," pursued the financier calmly; "I saw M. Gribaudo, and he said, 'The Government prefer being criticized by a man of honor like M. Gerold, rather than by a low-bred person like M. Albi. Besides, all the votes given to M. Bourbatruelle belong of right to M. Gerold, for the electors of the Tenth Circumscription are liberal to a man, and if some of them vote for the official candidate, it is only out of dread for theories which are neither liberalism nor republicanism, nor any thing else but blasphemy and blunder. If these electors had not suspected M. Gerold of making common cause with the revolutionists they would have elected him the other day.' This is what M. Gribaudo said. He is much maligned, I assure you, is M. Gribaudo. He spoke of you in the highest terms, and affirmed that the Government were particularly touched by the strikingly honorable way in which you had carried on the contest."

A tumult of emotion welled up in Horace's breast, and broke upon his face in changes of color rapid as a succession of waves.

"M. Macrobe," he faltered, springing forward, "I am sure it is to you I owe this — it is you who have been working to secure me this triumph."

"Pooh, pooh! my dear young friend, I have done my duty, that is all. You owe nothing to anybody save yourself."

"No, no. You say that because you are too generous to accept thanks. You are continually befriending me, who have done nothing to deserve it; and how I can ever

repay these acts of kindness and devotion is more than I know or can imagine."

"Why talk of that? Believe me, I am more than repaid already by the pleasure of serving you," said the financier, smiling. "I have but one wish, M. Gerold, and that is to see you prosper."

"Then add one more to your benefits, and complete my happiness," cried Horace, impulsively. "M. Macrobe, let me speak on a subject that is nearest my heart, but which I might not perhaps have dared to mention, had it not been for this new proof of the interest you bear me. I have had the presumption to hope that we might some day be connected by a closer tie than that of mere friendship. Yes, though I have nothing to offer but an honest name, and can compete with none who have great rent-rolls to give, I love your daughter. Yesterday I heard a report that Mdlle. Angélique was already betrothed to the Prince of Arcola, and the news caused me inexpressible sadness. If you could only tell me that this was not true, and cheer me with the assurance that I shall not hope in vain—that when I have created myself a position, you will allow me to pay my addresses to your daughter—you would be fulfilling my fondest desire, and I should look back upon this day as the most fortunate in my life."

M. Macrobe's features very cleverly expressed the greatest surprise, and he became grave.

"I had never suspected this, M. Gerold," he said; "but I should be dissembling were I to conceal how much your communication flatters me. I am unaware that the Prince of Arcola has paid his addresses to my daughter. I think the report must be a false one; but, in any case, rent-roll is the last qualification I should consider in any one who aspired to become my child's husband. I was a poor man myself, and have not found that wealth adds much to one's happiness. Honesty, courage, and ability are the only riches I set store by. In a word, my dear young friend, there is no man I would sooner own as my son-in-law than yourself."

In England, a man would have grasped the speaker's hand; in France they manage these things differently, Horace flung his arms round M. Macrobe's neck, and kissed him on both cheeks.

If he could have known the pleasure which this embrace gave the worthy gentleman!

On the following Sunday, Horace Gerold was elected Deputy of the City of Paris; though it was a close shave, as cognoscenti remarked. The Radicals, encouraged by

their first success, came up to the poll multiplied, united, and strong. The Bonapartists rallied round the "Liberal" candidate, and the result was:—

Number of votes recorded, 46,347.

GEROLD. . . . . 23,258

ALBI. . . . . 23,089

That is, a majority of ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-NINE VOTES!

A few weeks later, the "Gazette des Boulevards" announced to the world that a marriage had been arranged "between the newly-elected member for Paris, our ex-contributor, M. Horace Gerold (the Marquis of Clairefontaine), and Mdlle. Angélique Macrobe, daughter of the eminent chairman of the Crédit Parisien."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### EPISTOLARY.

So M. Macrobe had won the first game of his rubber. Won it promptly, cleverly, and completely. The second now began, and from the outset it looked as if he would win that too. Ten months after the Paris election the following three letters found their way through the post:—

*From Emile Gerold, Paris, to Manuel Gerold, Brussels.*

"RUE STE. GENEVIEVE, Jan. 7, 1857.

"MY DEAR FATHER,—I have just come in from pleading a rather dry case before a not very intelligent judge, and I find your good, welcome letter awaiting me. This weekly correspondence with you, that is the reading of your missives and the pleasure of replying to them, constitutes the gleam of sunshine in my somewhat lustreless life. Not, mind you, that I complain of this monotony, for I have failed to perceive that those whose existences are more variegated seem much the happier for it. But it is nevertheless a relief to turn now and then from my habitual studies—the poor devices by which men may best outwit one another—to the perusal of language so vivifying in tone, so humanely loving, so full of generous truth as yours. It is like escaping for a moment into a purer world.

"Yet, on the present occasion, are there not traces of unusual depression in certain passages of your letter; I mean those in which you speak of Horace? I have no wish to allude unnecessarily to the events of the last few months, which I can guess

have pained you and which I will not conceal have to some extent disappointed me. But be assured that, in so far as the heart goes, my brother is unchanged. He is, perhaps, a little sore at your not having come to Paris for his marriage, and it may be that this feeling reveals itself, as you say, by a slight tone of pique in his letters; but I do not think we should be altogether surprised at this, for it only argues the great value he attaches to your approbation and his extreme sensitiveness lest any of his acts should be susceptible, in your eyes, of misinterpretation. On this last score, it is true, I might re-assure him; for that his marriage was one of pure affection, unalloyed by any mercenary thought, neither you nor I certainly ever doubted. But it is not enough to tell him this. In his present temper of mind, he requires us to approve without reserve *all* his recent undertakings. Binding up, as it were, his marriage, his friendship with M. Macrobe, and his political course together, he resents any stricture upon one incident as a blame upon all three; and it wounds him to the quick to suspect that you or I can even remotely concur in any of the harsh criticisms which these different occurrences have evoked from his enemies.

"No doubt this morbidly nervous mood will give way in time to feelings more in consonance with Horace's naturally genial disposition; but until it does, I for one — half of whose contentment in life would be gone were I estranged from my brother — I submit to the necessity of the case and tacitly acquiesce in every thing. I wish our party had behaved with a little more fairness and tact to him. That they should have called upon him to retire after that unlucky first ballot was natural enough, but I do think it was wanting both in justice and generosity to support Albi against Horace once the other man had retired, and to reproach Horace when elected with being an official candidate. From a mere party point of view it seems to me that it would have been more politic of the Liberals to claim my brother's return as a victory. He would have served their cause then and faithfully; but their almost disdainful repudiation of him, contrasting as it does with the singular courtesy and kindness shown him by the other side, are producing the only fruits that could be expected under the circumstances. Horace complains that he has been ill-treated, and never refers to the subject without indignant bitterness. Nevertheless, from what I can gather of the debates in the Corps Législatif — scraps of which, you know, reach the public ear through drawing-room echoes — his is the only voice in that gloomy

building ever raised in defence of liberty. He opposes Government bills, advocates reforms which in times like these might be called subversive; and, were he stimulated by contradiction, I suspect he would go greater lengths in liberalism than many of those who essayed to brand him as a Bonapartist would dare do. But nobody contradicts him; I hear on the contrary that he is applauded. The plan of his adversaries appears to be to enthrall him by civility; and there could in truth be no surer way of touching one who is as open to kindly influences as he is quick to feel injustice. However, there is a boundary line dividing Horace's now wavering attitude from total secession, and when he has reached this line and sees the pit beyond, he may recoil. Such is my hope, I might add — my prayer.

"Meanwhile, domestically speaking, Horace is I believe happy. He resides in his father-in-law's house, and every time I visit him there, I find him looking bright and pleased with his lot. His wife is a gentle, lovable young person, shy and rather silent, but I think good. She submits to him in all things, and his chief pre-occupation seems to be to make her happy. M. Macrobe, at whose table I have once or twice dined, rather to satisfy Horace than myself, is also — I must do him that justice — very zealous in catering for his son-in-law's felicity. He bustles about, forms projects, agrees with every thing Horace suggests, and to me in particular he is most attentive. The family circle has lately been completed by the arrival of a Crimean hero just returned at the Peace. His name is Captain Clarimon; he was introduced to me as a kind of nephew of M. Macrobe's, and is, so far as I could judge, a pleasant fellow. Horace and he appear to have already struck up a fast friendship.

"I perceive I have covered so much paper that I will close here. I repeat, my dear father, how much pleasure your letters always give me; but it continues to be to me a source of daily increasing sorrow that your voluntary exile should be thus perforce prolonged, and that we should be compelled to exchange our thoughts in writing instead of by word of mouth.

'Cui dextræ jungere dextram  
Non datur, ac veras audire et reddere voces.'

"Why does not this Second Empire fall and open the gates of France anew to all the great and good men who are sharers in your proscription?

"With tenderest respect and sympathy,

"Your affectionate son,

"EMILE GEROLD.

"P.S. — I have forgotten to mention that

I may soon be obliged to date my letters from elsewhere than here, owing to the retirement from business of M. Pochemolle and the consequently possible sale of this house. The news took me a little by surprise, when the good man brought it up to me in person yesterday, enveloped in pompously deferential explanations that made the gist of the communication at first a little obscure. He said that 'my esteemed connection by alliance, Monsieur Macrobe,' had been the instrument of his attaining more rapidly to fortune than he ever would have done, had he confined himself to the beaten tracks of commerce. He had, by Monsieur Macrobe's advice, invested money in the *Crédit Parisien*, buying shares at five hundred which were now worth fifteen hundred, and the result was, that Madame Pochemolle was recommending him to retire and purchase a villa with a garden and a pond — Madame Pochemolle inclined, said he, for gold-fish in the pond — somewhere in the suburbs of Paris. I could see that it cost the excellent man a pang to relinquish the 'Three Crowns' to a stranger, and that, so far as he was concerned, the shop where his father traded, and the modest gains which they earned, seemed preferable to all the suburban villas in the world, with or without gold-fish. But, neither Madame Pochemolle nor Monsieur Alcibiade being of the same opinion, the draper is out-voted and will be set to perform — will-he, nil-he — the comedy of 'Le Rentier malgré lui.' There was almost a touch of pathos in the way he exclaimed, 'Our fathers made their earnings slowly, and prospered long; I have gone farther in one year than they did in fifty; yet somehow it doesn't give me the pleasure I should have thought. I keep fancying that money which comes so quickly into the pockets of those who have done nothing to deserve it, must have come equally quick out of the pockets of those who didn't deserve to lose it.' I promised M. Pochemolle I would apprise you of his change of condition. His words were, 'Pray, sir, inform my most respected preserver, with my humble duty, that selling cloth or wearing it, I shall remain as much his obliged servant as heretofore.'

"Ever affectionately,  
"E. G."

*From M. Hector Filoselle, London, to  
Horace Gerold, Paris.*

"LEISSESTER SQUARRE, Jan. 15, 1857.

"MONSIEUR LE MARQUIS. — I date this letter from the banks of the Thames in the metropolis of the Queen Victoria, whither I have journeyed upon business, and the occasion I seize is that of the Sunday re-

pose, which, in this great country, reminds me of the repose of model convict prisons. Great Heaven! figure to yourself a square as large as the *Place Vendôme*, and not one soul visible in it but a single policeman, who is melancholy; and around and about this policeman closed shops and cafés hermetically barricaded, as if they feared an invasion; for the English law decrees that man shall not be thirsty of a Sunday morning, and the publican who sells him drink is fined by the tribunal of Queen's Bench two sterlings. These laws astonish the stranger. Also, I have noticed that it is interdicted to play music on the Saturday, for yesterday I witnessed a milord chase from his door, with indignation, a grinder on the organ, who was presently pursued by a policeman, and, as they told me, conducted to prison, where he will be judged by the tribunal of Habeas Corpus. However, these are details with which I have not the heart greatly to occupy myself: being sad, even to the point that the business questions themselves lose their interest for me. Ah! Monsieur le Marquis, it was not merely a superficial affection I nourished for Mademoiselle Georgette. I had long meditated the project of making her happiness and mine, and on the day when you interposed, speaking the good word for me, I cried to myself, 'Ah, it will become a reality, that dream I cherish!' But fortune and other causes, amongst which I suspect the presence of a rival suitor, have coalesced themselves to defeat my ardent hopes and your benevolence. Already, at my last visit but one to Paris five months ago, shortly after your own marriage, Monsieur le Marquis, I noticed that the attitude of my future father-in-law, M. Pochemolle, had undergone a change towards me, and that the demeanor of my future mother-in-law — whom I have ever gratified with a moderate liking — was chilly, not to say freezingly, distant. On my next visit these impressions were more than confirmed, and now I am in receipt of a letter from Monsieur Pochemolle, which leaves no longer a place for doubt. He states that he relinquishes the draper's trade to devote himself henceforth to a retired life, and he adds that, under these altered circumstances, perhaps I shall see the propriety of breaking off an engagement which has ceased to be so suitable as it once looked. Alas, the good man! I know very well that it is not he who would write in this way; but husbands are the slaves of their wives, notwithstanding the Code Napoleon, and Monsieur Pochemolle does but express the sentiments that have germed in the feminine but unelevated soul of Madame Pochemolle. You will excuse me for

making you thus the confidant of my destroyed illusions, Monsieur le Marquis, but I wished to assure you that even in this moment of grief, when the faithlessness of woman is once more exemplified at my expense, I retain a recollection full of gratitude for the manner in which you deigned to befriend me. Life is a bale of mixed goods, out of which one draws at the hazard, to-day stuffs of bright color, to-morrow mourning crape. I this time have lit upon the crape. Well, well, it was fated; but, at least, this consolation is given me, to feel that Mademoiselle Georgette is, like myself, the victim of destiny, not the willing accomplice of a plot for ruining my well-loved castle in the air. Ah! the usages of the world forbid my now seeking any communication with her who was my betrothed, and my own pride will not permit me ever again to cross the threshold of those who have closed to me their doors. Yet should ever the opportunity present itself, I will say to Mademoiselle Georgette — as I would respectfully pray you to say for me, should the opportunity come first to you — that I bear no malice, but wish my rival well. This is for Mademoiselle Georgette's sake, against whom I could not bring myself to feel anger, even if I would. As for her mother — but no; I will take a noble vengeance on that woman. I will apply myself with aching spirit, but with renewed ardor, to the pursuits of commerce, in order that when I, too, have become rich, she may open her eyes to the mistake she has made, and murmur, 'I should have done better to give her to Filoselle.'

"Begging to enclose a prospectus of current prices of the house of Verjus & Tonnelier, wine-merchants, of Paris, whose goods I will guarantee sound; also the description of a new kind of bagpipe, patented by Messrs. Doremi, for whose house I travel, and three of which I have recently sold to Milord Ardcheanochrochan, a Scotch peer of distinction, I have the honor to offer you, Monsieur le Marquis, the assurance of my deepest respect and gratitude,

"HECTOR FILOSELLE."

*M. Prosper Macrobe to his Excellency M. Gribaud.*

"AVENUES DES CHAMPS ELYSÉES, Jan. 21, 1857.

"MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE, — I acknowledge the receipt of the report from the sub-Prefect of Hautbourg, which your Excellency obligingly forwarded to me yesterday. I laid it, as arranged, on a table where it was sure to meet my son-in-law's eye, and he read it after asking me how it came that such a document should have fallen into my possession. I explained that

the sub-Prefect was an acquaintance of mine who had sent me a duplicate of the copy he intended despatching to the Government, in the hope that I would intercede with the Clairefontaine family to do something for the perishing town; 'which,' added I, 'I should not have ventured to do had you not accidentally stumbled upon that report which I had mislaid.' He made no answer; but, during the rest of the evening, he remained pensive, and I could see that those passages of the report in which the sub-Prefect contrasts the now pitiable plight of Hautbourg with its flourishing condition when the Castle of Clairefontaine was tenanted, had produced upon him all the effect which I expected. I need not add — for your Excellency has doubtless been in a position to notice this fact yourself — how surely the great kindness and forbearance of the Government are operating on my son-in-law. I might adduce testimony of this in citing the very words he used when your Excellency, in the name of the Ministry, accepted the slight amendment he moved to a recent Police Bill. He said that 'whatever might be his opinions as to the reigning dynasty, Napoleon III. had a merit not common to his predecessors, that of selecting able ministers.' I have the honor to remain, Monsieur le Ministre, your Excellency's most humble and obedient servant,

"PROSPER MACROBE."

## CHAPTER XXV.

### A SPEECH, A VOTE, AND A SURPRISE.

It is two o'clock. Luncheon is just over, and a group of five persons are congregated in one of the most sunny morning rooms of the Hôtel Macrobe. The financier, with his brass-bound note-book in his hand, is jotting down the details of some pecuniary transaction in which he does not look as if he had been fleeced. Aunt Dorothée is counting, with an air of woebegone solitude, the patterns on the carpet, as if to divine what average sum in copper money each separate flower must have cost. Beside her on the blue satin sofa her niece unravels a skein of bright worsted which Captain Clarimon, the Crimean hero and her cousin, is holding with docility; and Horace, his back to the mantle-piece, interrupts the silence to read aloud occasional paragraphs out of the newspaper he is skimming.

A footman enters powdered and majes-

tuous, the incarnate image of "eight hundred francs a year and perquisites." "Monsieur le Marquis's horse is at the door," he announced. Horace no longer objects to be called M. le Marquis. Soon after their marriage Angélique — no doubt paternally instructed — remarked that she liked the title Madame la Marquise better than that of Madame Gerold. It was said in the same tone she would have adopted to state her preference for burnt almonds over candied cherries; but from that day Horace had suffered himself to be marquized without protest. He was not responsible, however, for the sudden and violent eruption of coronets which, after this little uxorial victory, burst upon every article of furniture or piece of plate on which it was possible to paint or engrave these symbols. Even his linen he now noticed had been secretly seized and branded.

At the announcement of the horse Angélique laid down her worsted and ran obligingly to fetch her husband's hat and gloves. She was the same pretty, silent Angélique as of yore. A shade more of timidity in her manner; a fainter shade of gravity on her beautiful face, and that was all.

Captain Clarimon also rose, displaying, when on his legs, a handsome giant six feet high, with bold, military face, mustaches waxed at either end as sharp as spear-points, and hands that must have held a firm grip of the cavalry sabre when cutting down rebel proletaires in the *coup-d'état* affrays, or Russians on the field of Inkermann. Crimean heroes being still the rage at that period, Captain Clarimon had been made welcome at the Hôtel Macrobe, and finding his quarters good, evinced no disposition to desert them.

"So you are off to your legislative duties, Marquis," said he, with more veneration than might have been expected from one who had learned by experience what a poor show an assembly of legislators makes against half a troop of horse.

"Yes," answered Horace, smiling to his wife, and thanking her as he took his hat from her hands. "Yes, Captain, but I don't know what we are going to legislate upon to-day. I have not seen the notice-paper."

"I think it is a colonial question," said M. Macrobe, shutting up his note-book with a well-satisfied snap; "the political régime of Martinique and Guadeloupe."

"Dull countries," remarked the Captain, "and cursed peppery — ahem, I beg pardon, ma belle cousine. I lived in garri-son there."

"Amongst the poor negroes," observed Angélique.

"Ay, the poor negroes who used to be slaves," exclaimed Aunt Dorothee dismally, as if the servitude of the black races had been the canker-worm of her existence.

M. Macrobe on the sly launched a thunderbolt-glance in the direction of Aunt Dorothee, and coughed to drown her misplaced sympathy.

"The negroes — yes, those poor fellows who used to be so happy a few years ago, and who now, by all accounts, are in a miserable state of destitution," ejaculated he.

"That's exactly it," laughed the Captain.

"The beggars were happy enough until a number of Deputies, half of whom had never seen a negro, and the other half of whom had never talked to one, laid their heads together to set them free. Up to that time Martinique and Guadeloupe had been flourishing. The negroes were well fed, well housed, and had no more work than was good for them. But, crack! down comes the abolition; and what's the result? Your nigger left to himself won't work at any price. Planters are ruined, trade dries up by the roots, and our two colonies go to the dogs. That's what comes of making laws," added he, sapiently.

"My father was amongst those who agitated for abolition," remarked Horace rather dryly.

"Of course, and quite right too," returned the Captain unabashed. "I am sure I should have voted for emancipating the poor devils; in fact, I'm for emancipating everybody, and letting them all do as they like. But if you'd been to Guadeloupe, I fancy you'd wish they had delayed the experiment until you were past visiting the place again. Why, I have ridden twenty miles along the coast and met not a living soul save three niggers, all stretched on their backs in the sun, and swearing it was too hot to work. Like oysters, 'pon my word."

"Well, as I know very little or nothing about the colonies, perhaps you wouldn't mind riding down to the House with me and enlightening me," said Horace, cheerful again. "One picks up useful waifs in conversation. I will order a second horse to be saddled."

The Captain good-naturedly acquiesced, and so did M. Macrobe, who seemed pleased with the arrangement. A second hack was soon brought round, and the Captain armed himself with a riding-whip.

"Au revoir, child," said Horace, kissing Angélique on the forehead. "What shall you do all the afternoon?"

"Long to see you return," she whispered, with a slight, sweet smile, which brought a ray of pleasure to his eyes, and to her features a little color. "Then, I have my

round of visits to make," added she, submitting to the second kiss with which he rewarded her pretty compliment.

The Captain also took his leave in cousinly style. Selecting by hazard, no doubt, a moment when Horace's back was turned, he said, "Au revoir, charmante cousine," and, bowing, lifted her hand to his lips.

As the gallant warrior was thus engaged, M. Macrobe's eye was fixed upon him with rather a curious expression.

The debate had already commenced when Horace settled into his seat in the House — if debate it can be called, where every honorable gentleman was known to be of the same opinion, and would infallibly vote the same way when the hour of "division" arrived. The Corps Législatif, indeed, had not been created that it might make itself much heard or felt. Its function in the constitutional machinery was to spin as noiselessly as possible; to do its little piece of allotted work in the way prescribed, but just that and no more; above all to avoid clanking, or in any way jarring upon the nerves of its imperial proprietor. The look of the session hall marked its altered destination from what the place had been in days passed by. Where was the tribune whence Royer-Collard had delivered his flashing orations; Manuel, Foy, and Benjamin Constant, hurled their fire; and where Guizot had stood at bay, breasting the attacks of Berryer, Lamartine, and Thiers combined? Gone. Where were the strangers' galleries in which two generations of Frenchmen had trained themselves to love of parliamentary eloquence, to worship of freedom? Where the journalists' box, in which, turn by turn, had sat all the master penmen who had moulded the thoughts of young France — Courier, Carrel, Mignét, Vitel, Sacy, Girardin? Present, but closed. Where the benches on which at one time, and in one array, had figured Victor Hugo and Beranger, Louis Blanc, and Quinet, Montalembert and Lamennais, Arago and Cousin? Present again, but peopled by two hundred and sixty gentlemen of debonnaire aspect and facile manners, with not an idea between them, but plenty of small talk; gentlemen culled pretty much to right and left as we gather mushrooms, from half-ruined estates, from the purlieus of the Stock Exchange, from plethoric, and, consequently, loyal Chambers of Commerce, from the semi-official press, from ministerial back-stairs, last and least, from court. All of which gentlemen had been shoved into the Corps Législatif to do their duty, and did it — voting as they were bid, and roaring very conscientiously, "Hear, hear," when a minister spoke, to the tune of five hundred pounds a year apiece.

As a counterpoise to these two hundred and sixty human and self-acting voting instruments, Horace's seat, slightly isolated from the others, being a little to the left of the President's chair, was the only one which could, by any elasticity of expression short of downright abuse of language, be termed independent.

As Horace entered, an obese legislator was sawing the air with his right hand, proclaiming the reasons which would induce him to vote in favor of the bill — a gratuitous piece of good nature which seemed so entirely superfluous to his colleagues that they serenely busied themselves in different ways and didn't listen to him. A large proportion of honorable members were writing their private letters, a good number more sprawling with legs outstretched, hands deep in pockets, and countenances upverted with a beatific gaze at the skylight, were sleeping the sleep of the just. Four or five, whom you had fancied poring with absorbed interest over statistical blue-books, were palpitating over the incidents of a steeple-chase at Chantilly, described in the usual graphic language by a reporter of "Le Sport;" and a pair who kept their backs turned to the rest of the world, and were pushing white bits of something composedly towards each other, looked suspiciously as if they were playing at dominoes.

Horace was soon surrounded in his seat — colleagues in squads came smirking up to kill time with a little quiet chat until the rising of the House. He was not unpopular, the Member for Paris. Deputies fat and lean, jovial and bilious, broke into smiles as he passed them. In the lobbies he reaped as many hat-salutes and shakes of the hand as he knew what to do with.

The prevailing notion was, that although independent, which was certainly a point against him, he was not dangerous, and might be trusted.

A canthe-visaged deputy, with a rasping voice and a nose like a fig, said pleasantly:

"Shall we have the satisfaction of hearing you to-day, Monsieur le Marquis? A debate in which I take some interest. Was a planter myself in the good times."

"In the time of slavery?"

"Precisely. I had five hundred slaves, and devilish contented they were. Never cowhided them except when they deserved it. Within three years of the abolition half of them were underground; floated themselves to the deuce on rivers of rum. Ah! the rascals."

"I do think it's so absurd to talk of niggers as human beings," giggled a young viscount with features livid from long vigils and hair in curl. "The Marquise de Ver-



meillon had a negro page she dressed in red, and an ape she put in blue—confoundedly *rococo* she was, the Marquise. And I used to say to her, 'Marquise, if those two exchange clothes I shall be giving sugar-plums to Snowball—this was the nigger—and my card to Adonis—this was the ape. Hee, hee, hee,' Every-body laughed. This was very funny.

"I lost a million francs by the abolition," resumed the fig-nosed planter, in a voice like that of a nutmeg on a grater, "but the colony lost more. Chaps that didn't understand any thing about the niggers' interest, nor about anybody else's; those that suppressed slavery. Why, isn't there slavery in all countries more or less? Look at our peasants who are taken by the Conscription at twenty, made to serve seven years, and risk being shot into the bargain. The niggers risked nothing, there wasn't a cleaner, happier lot going; why, it was like a prime concert to see 'em squat in a row and whistle in the sun. Then we used to marry 'em"—

"Yes," grinned the young viscount; "and I've heard of a nigger who was henpecked like fun, until one lucky day his wife was sold to one master and he to another. That's an advantage that wouldn't have been open to him if he'd been a free Frenchman. Once spliced with us whites it's always spliced."

More merriment, interrupted this time, however, by the sudden close of the obese member's speech. At this the House woke up for a moment and burst cordially, and without a moment's hesitation, into unanimous cheering. The members who were writing their letters, those who slept with their countenances heavenwards, those who were palpitating over the prose of the sporting-writer, and the pair who played dominoes, all looked up and shouted defiantly, "Hear, hear!" as if there were an invisible opposition making itself obstreperous on the benches of the Left and requiring to be put down. Then the President, a dapper statesman, ornamented with a red ribbon and star, consulted a list on his table, and called out to another deputy to rise and say something. It was very much indeed like a schoolmaster crying, "Boy Duval, stand up and construe."

Unfortunately for the regularity of the proceedings, the honorable gentleman appealed to was absent, having been taken ill in the morning; so was the next member on the list, who had been summoned away by telegraph at early dawn to bury a relative; and the third deputy whose name the President called was not yet arrived—whence an unexpected hitch. These debates, to tell the truth, were all

mapped out beforehand, like the programmes of a musical entertainment. In order that a sceptic public might have no handle for murmuring that honorable members did small work for their 500*l.* per annum, M. Gribaud, the Minister, and his Excellency the President, provided between them that no bill should be sent up to the Crown without a decent amount of preliminary speechifying to season it withal. They recruited talkative members—those preferred who had the great art of saying nothing, and putting it into a good many words. It would be arranged that Monsieur A. should get up and talk from two till a quarter past, that Monsieur B. should follow him from the quarter to the half hour, and that when Messieurs C., D., and E. had each had their twenty minutes' or half-hour's turn, according as they felt in condition, Monsieur Gribaud himself should rise—towards five or thereabouts—reduce all their arguments to powder, prevail upon them to withdraw their suggestions or amendments, which they were not likely to object to do, and get the bill voted by acclamation in time for everybody to be home and dressing for dinner at six. Now, when Messieurs C., D., and E. all failed to come up to time together, it was tantamount to what the unforeseen eclipse of the tenor, bass, and baritone at one of Monsieur Hertz's morning performances would have been. Some little consternation ensued. The honorable gentlemen who were writing their private letters nibbled the ends of their quills, the pair who played dominoes looked guiltily apprehensive lest they should be dragged out of their retirement and forced to speak whether they liked it or not; Monsieur Gribaud, who had been sitting with his arms folded and his head drooping on his chest, in apparent slumber—though of all men in the room he was certainly the most wide-awake, drew out his watch, but seeing it yet wanted two hours to six, put it back again and frowned. What was to be done? Propriety scarcely admitted of the Minister making a general appeal for somebody to devote himself, and it would not have concurred with the dignity of a legislative council for the President to exclaim, "I vow nobody shall go out of here until I get my three speeches." In this emergency all eyes sought Horace. What is the use of an Opposition member if he be not, prepared to spout by the hour at half a minute's notice?

So, drawn by that magnetic attraction which brings orators to their legs, Horace, without well knowing what he did, rose, and an instantaneous sigh of relief went round. He had not in the least made up

his mind as to what he should say, neither had he caught a dozen words of what the last speaker had uttered—moreover, he was not quite clear as to what the bill's scope was. These were disadvantages; but, being a Frenchman every inch, they did not appall him as they might have done the scion of a less glib-tongued race. Certes, there was a difference between the young man who had stammered the first phrases of his maiden speech before the judges of the Police Correctionnelle and the coolly confident deputy of the people. The confidence of twenty thousand voters must make a man self-trusting if any thing will. Horace began by running his hands through his hair, which seems to be a physical necessity with most Parisian speakers, and then, without hesitation, started into a retrospective survey of the history of the French colonial empire, which would be sure to be appropriate. He alluded to Duplex and Lally-Tollendal; compared La Peyrouse with Cook, somewhat to the disparagement of the latter; grew lyrical over Montcalm and the fall of Quebec; and towered to patriotic heights when describing how "the fairest jewels of our colonial crown" had been reft away by the avidity of a nation now at peace with us. This brought him to the negroes, and the question of compulsory and gratuitous instruction; which, like the Messrs. Somebody's pills, appears to be the panacea for all evils known and unknown. "The negroes were lazy and allowed our colonies to be ruined; why was that? Because they were not educated. If the negro were taught to read, and gratified with a free press to develop his liberal culture, not a doubt that he would take to work with an ardent zeal. Commerce would re-flourish under his efforts, and France would show herself in colonial prosperity, as in other things, to be the mistress of the world." This conclusion was hailed, as it deserved to be, with loud, long, and general applause, for the great merit of the speech was that, although nobody had understood it, it had occupied a good hour in delivery. All that now remained was for M. Gribaud to reply, which he did with adroitness, declaring he should not fail to remember the suggestion of his honorable friend, and that the question of negro instruction would for the future be foremost amongst those involving his most attentive consideration. Whereupon there was more cheering, enthusiastic and long continued; the question was put from the chair, and carried *nem. con.*; the pens, newspapers, blotting-books, and dominoes were stowed away, and everybody went home to dinner, France being the richer by a bill, and the Corps Législatif

the happier for three speeches. Such is civilization.

In the lobby, going out, Horace was joined by the Planter, who, raspingly and bluffly as ever, said, "Fine words, Monsieur le Marquis, and a good deal of body in 'em too, I don't doubt. Only, in practice, reading and writing don't any more change the nigger's nature than soap can whiten his skin. I've been to Jamaica and there seen model schools built a good many years ago by an Englishman named Guineaman"—

"Guineaman!" interrupted Horace, with a start, for he recalled the name of his uncle's wife, the woman whose slave-earned money had restored Clairefontaine, and set a lasting stigma of indignity on it.

"Yes, a slave-trader," returned the fig-nosed planter carelessly, "but, like all Englishmen, one who kept the Bible in his tail-coat pocket and called it his compass. When he walloped a nigger he took care to quote the chapter and verse that gave him authority, and I believe he wouldn't have exceeded forty stripes, save one, for any money."

"A hypocrite?"

"Wa'al, no, it's bred in the grain. Those English who are pr-ractical have discovered that they can do a good many more queer things by citing the Bible than we Fr-rrench can do without it. But I didn't know this Monsieur Guineaman;—he was dead and gone long befor-re my time. They used to talk about him at Jamaica, though, and showed the schools he built when he'd made his fortune; for it was his theory that slavery being lawful—for the Government didn't for-bid it then no more does the Bible now—he'd just as much right to tur-rn an honest penny that way as anybody else, provided, of course, he didn't bully his niggers, which I think good mor-rals. The-refor-re, as I say, he opened schools and preaching-houses to make the beggars lively, just as I at Martinique being Fr-rrench, set up dancing-booths to the same end. Only, my dancing-booths tur-rned up tr-rumps and Monsieur Guineaman's schools didn't. The niggers danced jigs fast enough, but be hanged if they loved r-reading and writing any more than hoeing and digging. It's not in the nature of the varmin'."

Which wise commentary brought the two legislators to the door of egress where both found their broughams. The fig-nosed planter wedged himself snugly into his and was whirled away to one of those banquets which kept his physiognomy in such perpetual glow; Horace was going to follow suit, and had already one foot on his brougham step, when a familiar equipage, drawn

by two superb bays, and driven with right British science, came like a hurricane down the Quai d'Orsay, ten yards off where he was standing, whirling up a spray of mud-drops and flint-sparks on its passage. The driver was the Prince of Arcola, who recognized him, and instantly reined in his steeds with consummate skill, clattering and champing on the haunches.

"This is a lucky meeting. I will give you a lift."

"With pleasure," said Horace, who was always glad to see the Prince; and he scrambled into the phaeton, which, as soon as released by the two cockaded grooms who had sprung to the horses' head, sped merrily on its course again.

"I have been on a call to some old friends of yours," said the Prince, as they debouched into the Champs Elysées with a speed that made the gaslights flit past them like flakes of fire thrown up by an engine in motion.

"I have almost as many friends as enemies now, Prince," was the smiling answer.

"I mean the Pochemolles."

"I have not seen them for an age," said Horace, with interest. "I heard last month they were going to retire, but when I went to congratulate M. Pochemolle on his rise in the ladder, he had already removed. They are all well, I hope, and the good draper is not yet counter-sick?"

"They are installed at Meudon," rejoined the Prince without smiling. "The villa is a pretty one, devoid of vulgarity, the dwelling of an honest man who retires on a loyally-earned competence. Both Monsieur and Madame Pochemolle are very well."

"And Georgette?" inquired Horace, after a moment's silence, though looking with something of archness at his interlocutor.

As if he had been expecting the question, the Prince quivered slightly. He did not immediately reply, but lashed his horses nervously into a faster trot. Then abruptly he turned his face full on Horace's and said: "Gerold, I have been wanting for the last twelve months to put you a question, but have never dared — you will guess why, perhaps, some day. Tell me now, on your word, between man and man, has there ever been anything between you and Georgette?"

Horace, though he had long suspected the Prince of paying a more or less avowable court to the draper's daughter, was little prepared for the attack, and changed color.

"Nothing of any importance," said he, evasively, and rather trying to laugh off the subject.

"Then there *has* been something," muttered the Prince, and it seemed to Horace that he turned pale.

"I swear to you that, so far as I know and believe, Georgette is a virtuous girl, if that is what you mean," he said.

The Prince seemed relieved; but musingly he exclaimed: "Then what is the significance of her flaming up as she does whenever your name is mentioned?"

Horace wondered. Why Georgette should thus flame up was to him inexplicable except under the hypothesis that she was an extremely forward person. He had not forgotten the whimsical display of spleen to which she had treated him a few months before, when the report of his marriage was beginning to gain ground; but this was a thing of the past now, which he was fain to dismiss from his mind as not worth brooding over. Besides, a woman's fair fame is a thing against which a man with the least spark of feeling is so loath to breathe a careless word, even when he has cause for suspicion and motives of personal rancor, that Horace checked himself on the point of making a rejoinder that would have reflected slightly on Georgette's conduct towards him, and answered guardedly: "As her father's lodger, I frequently saw Mlle. Georgette, and it may be that by occasional civilities, by those unmeaning compliments which we men pay without attaching any weight to them, I suffered my intentions to be misinterpreted. In this case the blame would be mine, not Mlle. Georgette's, and she might feel some resentment at what may seem to her to have been levity on my part. This is the explanation I suggest."

"And that is all that passed between you — positively all?"

"That is all."

"Well, you have taken a load off me," murmured the Prince, with an unaffected sigh. He flicked an invisible speck of dust off his near horse's collar, and looked as though he meant what he said.

"But tell me now, in your turn, why you catechize me like this?" inquired Horace, not without raillery, as his former not very charitable misgivings as to the Prince's own designs upon Georgette recurred to him.

They were not above a hundred yards' distance from the Hôtel Macrobe, and the phaeton was still going like wildfire. The Prince said: "Repeat to me once more what you affirmed about Georgette's blamelessness."

"I do; I affirm her entirely blameless, upon my word," said Horace earnestly.

"Well, then," answered the Prince with gravity, "if Mlle. Georgette will do me the honor to accept me, I will make her my wife."

Horace looked quickly round, as if his first thought was that the Prince was jok-

ing. But M. d'Arcola was perfectly composed. He spoke as if he had just announced his coming marriage to a princess of his own rank.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### A RECOGNITION.

THE Prince's communication ought to have left Horace indifferent, but somehow it did not. Let those explain this who, having ever formed the manly resolution not to love a girl because she was poor, or low-born, or any thing else uneligible, find these scruples accounted as nought by others richer, higher, and prouder than themselves. Horace was aware that there was not a living man who would have shrunk more sensitively from a mésalliance than the Prince of Arcola. But, apparently, his notions of a mésalliance were not those of the common world.

At dinner, without alluding to the circumstance, Horace asked his wife whether she had yet called on the Pochemolles at their new residence.

"Perhaps it would be civil," said he pensively, "as they sent us a letter, mentioning they were going to move."

"I will call, dear, if you wish it," answered Angélique in her tranquil voice; "but I could not do so before, for they gave no address."

"M. d'Arcola tells me they are at Meudon," said Horace.

"Very wise of them to choose the country," remarked M. Macrobe: "pure air, broad fields, life healthy and cheap."

"And shooting for those who can shoot," chimed in the Crimean hero.

"And shooting, as you say, Captain," assented his uncle.

For some time past it had become a sort of mania with M. Macrobe to depict rural bliss. Virgil never took greater pains to vaunt the charms of a rustic life, the sweet breath of kine, the scent of new-mown hay, and the unadulterated purity of country milk and butter than did the financier. Especially was it good to hear him hold forth on the pride and pomp of a manorial estate, the waving acres, the wagons groaning under loads of storied sheaves, the rows of peasants bowing with glad homage before their lord, and the turreted castle gleaming majestuously in the summer sun over river, field, and wood. Angélique, as if repeating a music lesson, would take up this pastoral in a minor key, say-

ing that she adored the country, and would "so like to have a small castle where they might spend the autumn." Captain Clarimon, not less bucolic, opined that a great noble should slaughter winged fowl on a grandiose scale, organize battues that would muster a whole country side, and run down a stag now and then with accompaniment of horn-tooting to stir up the minds of the clodhoppers.

That was a true saying of the ancients: *Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi, sed sæpe cadendo*. Under the frequency of these Georgic aspersions Horace was imperceptibly beginning to feel that the man who had no landed property, nor horned cattle, nor preserves, had missed the pre-ordained purpose of existence. To be sure, he might have purchased all these things on the very morrow with his wife's dowry had it pleased him. But he did not look upon this money as his. At her marriage M. Macrobe had given his daughter two millions and a half of francs, but Horace had insisted they should stand in Angélique's own name on the books of the *Crédit Parisien*, and be tied down absolutely to her by contract: and there he meant to leave them, never claiming the privilege of touching a centime. Besides, his notions of an enviable demesne were not associated with a brand-new estate, cut out to order and bought with ready money. When he thought of the matter the towers of Clairefontaine rose vaguely before him—Clairefontaine which might have been his, had his relative Guineaman made his fortune by swindling his contemporaries under the rose, instead of selling them openly in the broad light of day.

"Everybody likes the country," he remarked mechanically, in answer to M. Macrobe's observation.

It was Italian Opera night, and, on leaving the dining-room, Angélique was cloaked in a flowing white *burnous* by the attentive Crimean hero, who was continually and jealously on the watch to render little services. The same warrior brought the opera-glass, and took Angélique's fan into his special custody. He also made himself useful in fastening those six button gloves which ladies were then inaugurating, and which, had they existed in the time of Job, might have added one more to that sorely-vexed patriarch's trials of patience.

"You will take me to the opera, won't you, Horace?" asked Angélique, helplessly surrendering her small wrists to the gallant Captain.

"Yes, dear," answered Horace with the docility characteristic of husbands during the first year of their marriage; and he inquired what opera it was.

"I think it's *Don Giovanni*."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Aunt Dorothée, whose venerable head was crowned with an assortment of limp feathers that gave her the appearance of a demoralized bustard. "That's the play where the stage opens up and swallows a living being in the flames. You'll come away before that happens, won't you, dear? I'm always afraid to see that young man burn his clothes."

"You shall come away when you like, aunt dear," promised Angélique. "Are you ready, Horace?"

Horace was ready, and so was the Captain, who, as in duty bound, offered the Marquise his arm. But as they all sailed out together, with the exception of M. Macrobe, who participated in the belief of M. Alphonse Karr that music is but the most expensive of all noises, a servant announced "Monsieur Emile," and this upset the arrangements. Horace, not over sorry to be reprieved from four hours' stewing in a grand tier box, settled to join his wife later in the evening, the Crimean hero meanwhile undertaking to guard her under his valiant protection.

"The night is so fine that Emile and I will walk down," said Horace; "and I will be with you about the second act."

"And will you come too, Emile?" asked Angélique a little timidly, for she never brought herself without hesitation to call her grave young brother-in-law by his Christian name.

"I am scarcely in opera attire, sister," he answered kindly. "I only looked in on the chance of finding Horace disengaged, but I blame myself for monopolizing him in this way."

"Oh! you are quite right to come, brother, but you should let us see you oftener, and be here earlier, so as to dine with us."

She said this amiably, glancing up a little to her husband for approval, for she knew it was the surest way to please him to show civility to his brother. Then she held out her tiny hand to Emile, which he shook, thanking her.

"Well, old fellow, it's a long while since we two took an evening walk like this," began Horace, as he and Emile paced together arm-in-arm.

They were in the Champs Elysées, under the crystal dome of a clear sky, blue with the dark-blue of night, and irradiated by a moon of such silvery brightness that it made the gaslights look like dull red dots. Paris shows well on such nights, when the trees throw long lace-pattern shadows on the pavements, rows of fair white mansions gleam like polished marble, and lovers

stroll in pairs, whispering that *Je t'aime* which is of daily use in none but the "Latin" tongues.

"Do you remember those pleasant walks," continued Horace, "when we first came to Paris, three years ago? It seems like ten years off. We worked all day, often half the night, but now and then we gave ourselves a holiday, and took it out like this, wandering about the streets and guessing at the future. How gay they appeared to me then, the streets; and what smiles I used to see on the faces of the passers-by! Paris always struck me as a perpetual fair. Ah, those were the happy times!"

"But you are happy now, Horace?"

"Oh, yes!"

And there was a pause.

"But tell me about yourself," added Horace, breaking off from some internal reflection which had brought a frowning brow to his brow. "Let me look at you—you grow paler and paler. Why do you work so much, eh? Everybody talks of your indefatigableness. A judge told me the other night that if he had worked as you do at his age he would have been a Chief Justice of Appeal by this time."

"Then, you see, work does lead to something," smiled Emile.

"Ah, but my judge added the proviso: 'Or I should have been in my coffin,' which didn't re-assure me."

"I don't feel as if I were near my coffin, dear fellow. Pale men, like threatened men, live long."

"And you are happy in your way, and satisfied?"

"Why should I not be?"

"But you have no ambition, restlessness, eagerness to outpass somebody, or do something before the appointed time? I sometimes marvel at your calmness; we don't seem to be moulded out of the same clay."

"I suppose everybody has his small beacon of ambition beckoning him, Horace, but I fancy the surest way of attaining it is by plainly following the beaten track. It may be the longest road, but cuts across country often lead one into quagmires."

A short silence, and then they reached the Rue de Rivoli, that noblest of modern streets, with its half-mile colonnade, forum of foreigners, *Via Sacra* of hotel-keepers. Broughams glanced along the broad highway, bearing muffled forms to theatre and routs. Unbroken lines of flaming jets, intensified by dazzling reflectors, flooded the arches with light. Spaniards, Americans, Germans, Englishmen, sauntered up and down, smoking their after-dinner cigars, and examining the accumulated treasures of the shops.

"What wealth!" exclaimed Horace

"Paris has indeed under this reign become Cosmopolis. But, now, I wonder" — and he laughed — "I wonder if all these people we see here, and all the people in the shops there, were suddenly to sit down and say, 'We will make restitution of every franc that we have ever unduly earned, and of every franc that our fathers before us unduly earned and bequeathed to us in inheritance;' and supposing some power of another sphere were to inspire them with the faculty of making a faultless estimate of these sums — I wonder, I say, when the balance had been struck, how many of these persons we behold congregated from all the corners of the globe would have money enough left to smoke their cigars, or to keep those sumptuous shops going."

"What can have put such a thought as that into your head?" asked Emile, astonished. "This is disquieting philosophy."

"I was thinking about the nice discussions we barristers could raise as to what was honest gold and what was not. Given two men with large fortunes and relatives to inherit them. The first has been, say, a wine-merchant, and has conscientiously mixed his wines with logwood and water for a stated series of years. The second has with integrity followed a trade, which, during his lifetime, was lawful, but which was prohibited later, though even then opinions were divided respecting it. Now, which is the cleaner money of the two; that of the wine-merchant who regaled the public with a purple decoction at fancy prices, or that of the other man, who, pursuing a doubtful trade, yet conducted it according to his lights, straightforwardly?"

"I should like to hear more about the doubtful trade," answered Emile, quietly. "There are possibly in this crowd some police-spies from the Prefecture, sent out to worm themselves into the confidence of unsuspecting men, trap them into anti-Bonapartist utterances, and get them transported to Cayenne. As times go, the trade is a lawful one, but I should be sorry to finger any of its profits."

"Naturally. You speak like the good fellow you are. Still, I ask myself how many men would feel bound to do what we have done, and renounce the estate where their fathers lived because it had been bought back after arbitrary confiscation, with the money of a dealer who — well, who did what the custom of those days perfectly sanctioned."

This was the first time since many a long month that Horace so much as alluded to a subject which Emile had dismissed from his own mind once and for all as not admitting of discussion. Emile looked at his brother with an expression in which sudden

surprise and dismay were painfully blended, and it was in quite an altered voice that he said: "You are surely not regretting a sacrifice that was made of your own free will, Horace?"

"Not in the least. No, there's no regret whatever," and Horace laughed again in an off-hand way, though somewhat constrainedly. "To begin with, our father made the sacrifice before us, and I know he would take it so much to heart if either of us abandoned our resolution, that I wouldn't assume the responsibility even if I *had* changed my mind. But I haven't — no — so don't be alarmed. I was only speaking on supposition — supposing there were two other men placed in our predicament, and you and I were commenting on what they ought to do, I think, then, the case might afford scope for argument. That's all."

And argue it they did, walking slowly during two hours through the streets, often retracing their steps, occasionally stopping altogether; the one conversing with animation but simulated unconcern, the other too much troubled to say all he would have said had he felt the debate to be as hypothetical a one as his brother would have had it seem. At eleven they stood outside the Opera House, and the theme was not yet exhausted; for, bidding each other good-night under the portico of the theatre, Horace said, a little flushed, but cheerfully: "Mind, old fellow, all this is purely speculative; talk to while away the time and nothing else. It was our walk set me thinking of Clairefontaine. You recollect our visit there; that old woman who showed us over the place, our ovation when we returned to the worthy town, and the stones with which the good people pelted us in guise of *pax vobiscum* to the railway-station. It was just such a night as this. By the way, you hear oftener from Brussels than I do: our father was quite well, at the last writing?"

"Quite well, thank God."

"I will write to him myself in a day or two. But his letters to me are sad; they give one the idea that he is suffering. Well, good-night, dear fellow, and mind what I repeat, this evening's chat has been words, nothing more."

"Good-night, Horace."

They shook hands and parted; but had Horace followed his brother round the corner of the street, he would have seen that, collected as Emile had been all the evening, tears started to his eyes as soon as his brother's back was turned, and that he walked home with the lagging step of one who had received a blow, whose faith in a loved being has been shaken.

Horace was conducted by a bustling at-

tendant to the box of Mdme. la Marquise de Clairefontaine. A prima-donna was indulging in terrific screams under pretence of singing, and the audience hung spell-bound on the enchanting sounds. The fig-nosed planter, alone, whom Horace desisted slumbering in a pit-tier lodge under the mutely reproachful eye of Mrs. Planter, appeared to protest by his attitude against this manner of spending an evening. Every part of the house was crowded, and the Italian Opera being the only theatre in which the play-going Frenchwoman will unveil her shoulders, and the Frenchman submit to the tyranny of swallow-tails, the effect was not bad.

"Do you recognize any one you know?" asked Angélique, prettily, making way for Horace on the chair beside her, which the Crimean hero had vacated on his entrance.

Angélique's large, limpid eyes were always so intently fixed when uttering the simplest questions, that Horace detected nothing unusually attentive in their gaze on this occasion.

"Let me see, dear child," he said, taking her glass. "On the tier above there's Mdme. de Margauld; is that who you mean? a pretty woman, and dresses sensibly; then there's Mdme. de Masseline, wife of my co-deputy. They say her pin-money comes from the Prefecture, where she carries all that she picks up in society. I refuse to believe it, though, for you ladies malign one another mercilessly, and it was a lady gave me that pretty piece of scandal. Then there's the Austrian ambassadress, and Mlle. Cora, the dancer, costumed with infinitely more propriety than her Excellency, and Mdme. Gribaud — why, yes, dear child, I recognize everybody. But there's not a face" — restoring the glass and nodding with a smile, "more pretty, or a dress more tasteful than those of some one whose name you may guess."

"Look again," said Angélique, her mild eyes calmly, inquiringly intent as before. "There, almost opposite us."

Horace looked again, and this time his researches were guided by several pairs of eyes in the stalls converging towards one point, a box where shone a truly imperial beauty. She was the most striking face in the house; but it took Horace some seconds to rally his fluttering impressions, and to grasp who it was. Georgette!

"Their coming in caused quite a sensation during the first entr'acte," pursued Angélique, quietly; but she never withdrew her eyes from her husband, who now did not put down the glass. "Everybody seems to admire her."

"Reminds me of those Georgian beauties whom I saw at Constantinople; lustrous

faces, scarlet lips, and dark hair," struck in the Crimean hero; "but I prefer blonde features."

In spite of himself, Horace's gaze seemed riveted. The box was occupied by Madame Pochemolle and the draper, but these excellent people, not knowing much of etiquette, had given the place of honor to their daughter. In the background the Prince of Arcola was dimly recognizable. Georgette was pensively rapt in the music, but at intervals she turned to answer some remark of the Prince's, or bent her head with modest grace in token that she was listening to him. Could this be the Georgette of the Rue Ste. Geneviève? Was it possible that a few yards of silk and a trinket or two had been able to convert the humble girl of the linen-shop into a beauty out-vying all the most courted women of the chief city of cities? When Horace put down the glass it was with a slight tremor of the hand.

"Is she not beautiful?" said Angélique, in whose voice no unaccustomed inflection was noticeable, at least to her husband.

"Yes — that is, no — I find her altered a little, improved, perhaps," answered Horace, affecting an indifference which his reverie-struck mood belied.

"Good gracious!" dolefully exclaimed Aunt Dorothée, at this opportune juncture. "Here is that dreadful Statue come to take that young man down into the flames. My dear, I was quite unwell last time I saw this."

"Well, madame, we will leave then," said Horace, at once rising. "Angélique, child, shall we go?"

"Yes, dear," she murmured simply, and there was a putting on of cloaks and screwing down of opera-glasses, which called into play the Crimean hero's chivalry, and filled up a minute. During that minute, after assisting in the swathing of his aunt, Horace came to the front of the box and gazed again across the house. His glance may have been charged with something of electricity, for Georgette almost instantly looked up and saw him. But had he been a stranger seen for the first time, had he been one of those curly-pated dandies in the stalls, one of the box-openers in the lobbies, one of the chorus-singers on the stage, her expression could not have been more stony, more coldly unconscious. She turned her head away without vouchsafing a mark of recognition, either unfriendly or the reverse. Horace turned away too, and drew out his handkerchief to wipe away a drop of moisture from his brow. As he did so he observed the cipher on his handkerchief. It was one of those which Georgette had embroidered for him as a gift two years before.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## PRINCE COPHETUA'S WOOING.

THE Prince of Arcola's mansion was remarkable for other things besides the architectural perfections which made it one of the finest in a capital where, Revolution and Equality aiding, the only fine palaces extant are those belonging to Government; the rest of mankind lodging themselves in edifices showy enough when looked at by the hundred, but separately, cramped and partaking of the doll-house. The Hôtel d'Arcole had an essentially English aspect, which it owed to the Anglophilist tastes of its proprietor, and to the valuable counsels of the eminent Mr. Drydust, who had laid himself out to show the Prince, his friend, what the dwelling of a British noble ought to be, and had done so with success. An air of home greeted the invader. The floors both in corridors and rooms were covered with carpets; nobody was exposed to come down flat over superlatively polished boards as slippery as glazed frost. The doors all shut properly, which French-made doors do not, the Gallic workman being particular about the trim look of his panels and the smooth roundness of his handles, but careless as to his hinges and lintels. Then you saw branching antlers and trophies of hunting-whips in the vestibules; bound books on the tables (not those disastrous *brochures* which tumble to pieces in one's hands); and the walls teemed with the works of British artists in oil and water-color; for the Prince dearly loved English landscapes, and sporting cracks, and was a little severe upon the artists of his own country, saying that unless you gave them women to paint they were fit for nothing.

On the morrow, however, of the *Don Giovanni* night at the opera, the Prince might have been detected in the un-English act of putting himself into dress clothes at eleven o'clock in the morning. And he did this gravely, for the business he had before him is never a light one in any country, and in France is generally attended with a certain degree of ceremony — the asking a lady's hand of her parents.

Yes, he had taken the resolution to seal his fate that day; and as he adjusted his speckless white cravat in the looking-glass, said to himself, what so many have muttered before him, and so many since — that in another couple of hours he should be the most fortunate or the wretchedest of men. Not that he had any reason to foresee that he should be the wretchedest; this did not appear likely, but a little modesty never

comes amiss. It ought, perhaps, to be mentioned that there is no binding necessity for a Frenchman about to call upon his prospective father-in-law to attire himself in black. Aristocratic fathers-in-law are content to regard many-hued trousers and buff-dogskins as sufficient evidences of the intention to render their daughters happy; but the bourgeoisie cling more fondly to venerable traditions. It was certain that M. Pochemolle must have plighted his troth to Madame Pochemolle in a dress coat, and the Prince was but evincing his natural tact in seeking to avoid in any way hurting the worthy man's sense of the becoming. In addition to the staidness of his apparel, the Prince had determined that his equipage would have a suitable degree of solemnity. He had ordered round his family coach, which habitually saw service only at the burial of his kinsmen, and was an imposing vehicle with hammer-cloth, four coronetted lamps, and room behind for two vassals with cocked hats to overawe the populace and staves to keep them at a distance.

The Prince was ministered to by a valet of such unmistakable British complexion that one would have sworn he had answered to some such advertisement as this; "Wanted a man with red whiskers and a stiff shirt-collar. Must have an impassive mien, drop his H's with dignity, always look as if he had just been brushing his hair, and say, 'Yes, my lord,' in a tone of well-bred composure. It is indispensable that this individual should tacitly, but firmly decline having any language but his own imposed upon him, and should distinctly object to adopt either the diet, habits, or sentiments of the foreigners amongst whom he may reside." This loftily spruce gentleman stood behind his master holding white gloves, crush-hat, and perfumed handkerchief; and the Prince conversed with him, wielding his English with the intrepidity of a nobleman who read his "Times" every morning and really understood four-fifths of it.

"I am right, like this, Bateson?"

"Yes, my lord."

"And the cravat goes well?"

"Yes, my lord."

"I think, Bateson, I will wear my rosette; this occasion is exceptional."

Bateson extracted from the dressing-case a rosette the size of a Napoleon, and presenting a combination of colors. The Prince had been decorated for an act of courage performed when almost a boy in saving somebody's life at the risk of his own; but he never sported this order, for which half his countrymen would have given their ears; nor two others less striking,



one conferred by the mighty monarch of Monaco, in whose principality he had won with éclat a gentleman-rider steeple-chase, and the other by the grand potentate of Baden, as a reward, perhaps, for once breaking the bank in that serenely gambling duchy.

"Now, Bateson, it is well," said the Prince, fastening the rosette to his button-hole. "For what hour have you commanded the coach?"

"For half-past eleven, my lord."

"And it is now?—Mon Dieu, it is only eleven five! The time seems long when the heart beats."

At the moment when the Prince was emitting this aphorism, some similar reflection, though suggested by different causes, was possibly obtruding itself upon three at least out of the four members of the Pochemolle family. It is all very well to give up business and establish one's self at Meudon, but the difficulty is to devise the wherewith to make the hours pass, when one has been used all one's life to measure calico, and finds one's self suddenly deprived of that occupation. M. Pochemolle, with a newspaper under his arm, which he had read and re-read, advertisements and shipping intelligence included, was asking himself what on earth he should do to bridge over the interval between the *déjeuner à la fourchette*, just over, and the dinner, yet five hours distant. An immense garden-hat that covered his honest head, gave him the appearance of a melancholy mushroom as he meditated this proposition. Madame Pochemolle, with less reason to vex herself, seeing that she had her household cares to attend to, and the never-failing resource of slipper-working when those were deficient, nevertheless thought that there were days when the Rue Ste. Geneviève, with its ceaseless flow of customers, its lively gossip of all that was going on in Paris, and the hum of the great city, audible without, was not always such a very dull residence. Of course, she would have suffered herself to be tortured by the rack sooner than acknowledge, even internally, that she regretted the Rue Ste. Geneviève; only her opinion was that if M. Pochemolle had been "a little less in a hurry to remove into the country," if he had postponed his retirement for, say, another year or so, it would have done no harm. Note that the good draper had only been driven to retire after the most energetic and valiant resistance on his part. Domestic strife had raged long and ardently; and Madame Pochemolle had only carried her point by shedding tears, and exclaiming she saw M. Pochemolle was brutally bent on condemn-

ing her and her children to a life of drudgery. But ladies have short memories for these kinds of particulars.

As for M. Alcibiade Pochemolle, the exaltation of his sire to the *rentier* class had opened before him an endless vista of leisure hours, which he had immediately inaugurated by a series of walks from one extremity of the capital to the other. After a fortnight, however, these excursions had become slightly monotonous, partly from being conducted in tight, new boots, partly because M. Alcibiade was forced to stride alone, his former friends, who had not risen to fortune simultaneously with himself, being busy behind their several counters till long after the going down of the sun. So M. Alcibiade now spent his days at Meudon, where small occurrences assumed giant proportions in his eyes. The falling down of a chimney, the escape of a neighbor's rabbit, the discovery of a mole-hill dug furtively during the night under the shelter of a wall-flower, gave him subjects for reflection, and varied, if not always entertaining, talk until it was bedtime. And a true godsend was afforded him when three workmen, in fustian and with pick-axes, for all the world like Paris workmen, came and took up the road in the vicinity of the villa Pochemolle, in order to lay down a water-pipe. M. Alcibiade, perched upon a garden-mound, followed their movements with absorbed interest, like a Layard watching the excavations of Nineveh, and he was thus intent when suddenly his vision was dazzled, and his voice uprose, shrill and amazed.

"My eye! here's a swell turn-out coming down the Paris road. Coachman with a wig on, horses with gold-plated harness—what steppers, and what a dust! It's one of the Court nobs going somewhere. No. Eh, by jingo! I say, father, mother, blessed if it ain't stopping here!"

M. Alcibiade stood dumb-stricken on his mound. Madame and M. Pochemolle looked up bewildered, but instinctively began, the former to smoothe her gown, the latter to rumple his necktie in a wild and distracting effort to make it sit straight. Who could it be? But they were not kept long in suspense, for the maid-servant, arriving with the air of one who heralds something startling and incomprehensible, said: "Monsieur the Prince of Arcola."

Although the visits of the Prince were sufficiently frequent to give him the character of an established friend of the house, yet his name was never announced without causing pleasurable emotions to the draper and his wife. M. Pochemolle was relieved from all solicitude about the flight of time, which sped by fast enough when the

amiable nobleman was there to chat and to listen, for, above all, the Prince was a capital listener, and Madame Pochemolle liked the finished manners and pleasant smile of M. d'Arcola. Being, moreover, never quite able to forget that he was a prince, and a rich one, she enjoyed these advantages twice as much as if he had possessed finished manners and a pleasant smile, but been some one else, not a prince, and not rich — which is only natural.

On the present occasion, however, it was at once evident, both to M. and Madame Pochemolle, that the Prince of Arcola had not come to chat, or to make himself simply agreeable. His mien was too serious, his deportment too ceremonious, and Madame Pochemolle's matronly heart went *thump, thump*, against her stays. Was the mother's idle, impossible wish she had formed about to be realized? It was an old dream, and had been more than once laid aside, then taken up again, like all other dreams, good or bad. For a while she had timidly dared to hope that Horace Gerold, who they said was a marquis, would ask for Georgette; but that had come to nothing. Then the Prince had introduced himself into their small circle, and, with maternal quickness, she had begun hoping — very timidly and very silently, to be sure — again. But it seemed as slender a chance as the first. The Prince came, indeed, and was kindly, and there was a good deal in his ways and words that encouraged the supposition that he was courting. But it never went farther than very friendly attentions, so that Madame Pochemolle had often resolved that she had pitched her ambition too high, and that she must be content with such a son-in-law as her own draper's sphere could afford. Still, she persevered in her fond fancy, and, woman-like, had, in view of possibilities, set herself to thwart the Filoselle engagement — ultimately achieving success, though it had cost her honest husband a pang, and had made him feel uncomfortable and conscience-stricken ever since.

Now, what was to be the issue of all this?

During the prefatory interchange of courtesies Madame Pochemolle, in one glance, devoured every article of dress the Prince had on, noticing also his rosette — magic symbol, fascinating to the eye of Frenchwomen! The Prince had followed the servant-maid into the garden, where Madame Pochemolle had been sitting working under a tree, and M. Pochemolle staring at the clouds. Georgette happened to be in doors.

There was a moment's animated bustle on the part of the maid and M. Pochemolle to get another garden-chair, and then the

Prince said, with quiet earnestness, "I hope I am not intruding at this early hour, madame and monsieur, but I have a communication of importance — of great importance — to make, and I wished to be certain of finding you at home."

Madame Pochemolle bent her head, and the heart went *thump, thump*, at an accelerated pace. M. Pochemolle looked in the direction of M. Alcibiade, as though to inquire whether that gentleman were one too many.

The Prince saw and hastened to add: "I beg Monsieur Alcibiade will remain. As a member of the family he has a right to hear what I am about to say." — He coughed. — "Monsieur Pochemolle, I do not think it necessary to search for circuitous phrases to prefer a request which, perhaps you already divine. Besides, my emotion at this moment counsels me to be brief. I have the honor to ask your permission" (here he rose) "to offer my hand to your daughter."

A red blush suffused Madame Pochemolle's features. In that second the poor woman looked twenty years younger. For nothing she would have got up and kissed the Prince. As it was, her still buxom face broke into dimples and smiles, and her eyes sparkled as they had not done for many a long day.

The effect on M. Pochemolle was not so instantaneous. He sat as a man who would like to hear the thing over again; but presently, when the truth, with its flattering train of consequences, flashed upon him, the latent fire in his French nature burst out as a conflagration over eyes, ears, and countenance at once. He became purple. He let fall his straw hat, and, in trying to pick up that, let go his newspaper. There was he, Pochemolle, going to marry his daughter to a member of the highest nobility, and to become the cynosure and envy of the Syndicate of Drapers! The ground seemed to swell under his feet, and it is to be feared that M. Filoselle, that pearl of young men, was, for the nonce, relegated to a very obscure nook in the temple of memory.

With respect to M. Alcibiade, the idea that presented itself to this gentle youth's imagination, with the inexorable force of logic, was that he should henceforth be able to talk of "my brother, the Prince," and heap humiliation on the head of his best friend and schoolfellow, Jules Paquet, whose sister had married a doctor. He grinned, and for the next quarter of an hour, fixed his gaze in enrapt contemplation on the Prince's white gloves. How they fitted him, those gloves, and what small hands those "nobs" had!

It would be superfluous to describe the

rest of the interview; the inevitable vows proffered on one side, the assurances of feeling unspeakably honored, touched, and so forth, on the other. Those who have witnessed one of these scenes have seen a dozen, and those who have never beheld one, may satisfy themselves by dividing as much sunshine, smiles, pleasant awkwardness, and incoherent sentences among three people as may be managed without making all three ridiculous. The element which occasionally tempers these interviews with a little cold shade—the dowry question—was adroitly suppressed by the Prince's remarking at an early stage that it was his desire to take *Mdlle. Georgette* without a portion; and mentioning at the same time a settlement so overpoweringly and unprecedentedly handsome, that a grand duke himself might have accepted it. Whereat, *Mdme. Pochemolle* was very acarily entering into the melting mood; *M. Pochemolle* stammered and became purpler than ever; and *M. Alcibiade*, who was quite acute enough to appreciate the amelioration which was being thus introduced into his own share of the paternal heritage, giggled and formed an infinity of reflections favorable to the method in which "nobs" managed money-matters.

It was not until full twenty golden minutes had elapsed, that it occurred to either of the delighted parents to call into council her whom the negotiations most concerned. But at a point where the conversation, emotional as it was, began insensibly to flag, *Mdme. Pochemolle* rose, and, with a sweet smile, said: "*Monsieur le Prince*, I will call *Georgette*. She had a letter to write to one of her friends, but it must be finished by this time."

*M. Pochemolle* understood that this was a hint, and rose likewise to leave the coast clear. He would have retired with one of those bows which he used to reserve for customers who had bought a thousand francs' worth of goods at a sitting, but the Prince extended both hands together, and there was a cordial, sturdy grasp. Emboldened, and feeling that he had yet his part to play in the domestic event, *M. Alcibiade* thereupon came forward too, with the words "my brother" already itching on his lips. But he bottled them in with an effort, as, perhaps, premature, and vented his enthusiasm by working the Prince's arm energetically up and down like a pump-handle. Then he vanished.

It was not long before *Georgette* came out, sheltering her dark eyes under a light parasol, and glancing with some inquisitiveness to see who the "friend" could be whom her mother had announced with such mysterious archness as desiring to see her. She was

so used to the Prince that she had not thought it could be he. Since that day, now distant, when he had offered her his homage in terms slightly ambiguous, and been indignantly rebuffed, he had behaved towards her rather as an affectionate elder brother. She had grown to feel at ease with him, and his visits were agreeable, but unexciting events to her. When, however, she caught sight of the formal dress, the face lit up by a hopeful and expectant gaze, the ray of pleasure that greeted her appearance, she saw what was impending. Any other girl would have done so, for there is an intuition in these things, and the language of the eyes is plainer to comprehend than any. She advanced, her parasol trembling a little, and a bright blush mantling on her handsome cheek; and the next minute found her confronting a proposal as tender and respectful as lover had ever made, or as maiden could ever wish to hear.

What passed within her heart at that minute, she herself, and the spirits who read the human heart, alone knew. Considering the attentions which the Prince had for so long a time bestowed on her, it could scarcely be said that she felt surprised, yet the quick heaving of her bosom, the sudden trouble of her manner, argued that she had almost ceased to expect the proposal, and that it had been a relief to her to think it might never come. For a moment hesitation painted itself on her features. A struggle followed that no eye could detect, for the pangs of it only revealed themselves by that quivering of the lips that resembles the ripple on the surface of water when there is a violent commotion very deep beneath. Then a forgotten passion seemed to rise amidst this strife, like a combatant who has been left for dead upon the battle-field and revives. She essayed to resist, she murmured some uncertain words; but it was of no use. The old passion mastered her; all the color fled from her face; and when she gave the answer—trembling all over, yet endeavoring to show gratitude through the tears in her eyes—it was a refusal.

The Prince was not prepared for this. Without more infatuation than is the unavoidable lot of those who have never found the other sex very hard of conquest,—rather the contrary—he had counted upon success—an easy success. On hearing *Georgette's* refusal he turned whiter than the cloud which at that moment darkened the sun as if ironically to symbolize the eclipse of his hopes.

*Georgette* took pity upon his distress. She liked him too well not to be moved by the look of astonished pain that had settled on his features.

"*Monsieur le Prince*," she said, trying to

keep in her tears and to speak calmly, "I will not conceal the truth from you. Generous and good as you are, you deserve to have a heart that would be wholly yours, and that I could not give you."

"Were my fears, then, founded?" he asked, sorrowfully. "Can it be that?" —

"You guessed many months ago that I had a secret grief," she continued, completing his thoughts, and leaning for support with her hand against a chair. "You guessed my grief, and respected it. I thank you for that very gratefully, and for all the kindness you have shown me since. I cannot tell you how gratefully I thank you. I thought I should surmount this — grief. By not thinking about it, by persuading myself that the person who had caused it was not worthy to inspire such a sentiment, I had brought myself to believe that I had done so. But it seems there are feelings which neither time, nor reason, nor contempt even, can extirpate. Perhaps — But no; I was going to say that if it had been anybody I esteemed less than you I might have acted differently to what I am doing. There are men who would ask nothing more of me than to be a good wife, and would never have questioned my heart to know whether there was an image in it besides theirs. I could have accepted such a part, which would have required only obedience, and a show of cheerfulness. But I cannot bear to deceive *you*. I might be your wife, but there would always be between me and you the thought of the man I once loved, whom I thought till just now I had forgotten, but whom I find I love still — for indignation, jealousy, resentment, are in these cases only other forms of love. You will forgive me," she added, looking at him with a timid, appealing smile, "for speaking so frankly."

Would he forgive her! He would have cast himself at her feet in that minute and told her that he loved her more deeply and truly than he had ever done before, and this would have been true. But if a habit of society does nothing else, it teaches a man when to pause, teaches him to know when pleading will be of no effect. Georgette's sincerity, though mild and timorous, would prove as resisting as a wall of steel, and the Prince saw it.

"Georgette," he said, in a voice which he was quite unable to control so as to stifle the quaver, "I will not say that I shall go away from here resigned to my fate, for this would be promising beyond my strength. I shall leave you with a wound which Time, I know, will not heal; but let me assure you that if my respect and admiration had been capable of increase they would have been heightened by this interview. And if

I may beg a favor in this supreme meeting, it is that you should remember, always remember, that there are circumstances in which the boundless devotion of a friend may be of help, and, should such circumstances ever arise, not to deprive me of the happiness of serving you."

Perhaps she was never so near loving him as after this simple and feeling renunciation.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### IDLE REGRETS AND BAD RESOLUTIONS.

MEN make one great mistake with regard to women: they fancy they can deceive them, which they seldom can. For all the good that dissimulation does a man, he might just as well write out his secret at full length and pin it to his breast — that is, of course, when his secret concerns a woman, and the person who wishes to discover it is another woman. Horace was laboring under the convenient impression that Angélique had detected none of his agitation at the theatre; that his tremor, the last look he had cast at Georgette's box, and his subsequent paleness, had all escaped her. Coming down the staircase of the opera, he had even had the naiveness to ask his wife why her hand shook slightly on his arm, and on her answering that it must be the cold, had accepted this reply with that undisturbed serenity which is one of the salient traits of husbandship.

The next day Horace rose pre-occupied. He had no appetite for his ten o'clock breakfast. Took up the "*Moniteur*" when the table was cleared away, and set himself to read it — but did not read it, and held it listlessly on his knee whilst his eye wandered away to some point on the horizon, visible out of the window across an expanse of leafless garden. And, again, he was intimately persuaded that no one observed his absent mood, that no eye followed his, that no change indeed was noticeable in his manner. And what wonder? Did he remark any change in Angélique?

Angélique was pretending to read too. Of late she had taken to reading, not because she found any greater interest in books than before, but because Horace had good-naturedly bantered her once or twice on not knowing who Bernardin de St. Pierre was, and on imagining that Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the inventor of the Post Office.\* So she read as she would

\* The General Post Office of Paris is situated Rue J. J. Rousseau.

re done any thing else to please him—  
 ten poison, or put her hand in the fire.  
 or her notions of wifely duty were simply  
 mmed up in this: passively to obey, and  
 all in her power to render happy the  
 man who had married her in spite of her  
 wn timidly expressed forebodings that he  
 ould repent of his course later.

The book she held was "Paul et Virginie,"  
 and, perhaps, at any other time the touch-  
 ing adventures of this loving pair would  
 have arrested her attention; but now she  
 turned the leaves of the old book with ab-  
 stractedness, casting glances, which be-  
 came each time more furtive and longer in  
 the direction of her husband. This had  
 been going on for some time when there  
 was a knock, and a servant entered, bear-  
 ing a number of letters and some more  
 papers on a tray.

It was one of the little pleasures of Hor-  
 ace's married life to ask Angélique to read  
 his letters aloud for him. She delighted  
 in the practice so far as it was in her tran-  
 quil nature to delight in any thing, so when  
 the letters had been laid on the table, she  
 put down her book and said: "Shall I  
 read for you, Horace?"

"Yes, please, dear child," he answered,  
 and as was his wont handed her a pencil  
 with which she jotted down in the tiniest  
 of handwritings the substance of the re-  
 plies that were to be sent. The letters  
 were all collected afterwards and trans-  
 ferred to a secretary, whose office, by the  
 way, was no sinecure.

From all quarters of the empire came  
 the letters which matutinally worried the  
 elect of the Tenth Circumscription. Con-  
 stituents wrote in great force, begging fa-  
 vours for themselves and for their sons, who  
 were ambitious of government clerkships,  
 or for aged and afflicted relatives, needing  
 admission to privileged lunatic asylums.  
 The ballot system is a godsend to those  
 electors who regard political rights as  
 blessed instruments for the furtherance  
 of private objects; for when the suffrages  
 are recorded openly, one is exposed to the  
 unpleasant risk of not being able to ask  
 favors at all of one's representative, should  
 he unfortunately be a man whose candida-  
 ture one has opposed. Then there were  
 letters from old barrister friends, or to speak  
 more correctly, young barrister friends,  
 who, having been rabid Republicans at  
 twenty, aspired at twenty-five to be ap-  
 pointed deputies to the Procureur Impérial,  
 and would feel eternally grateful if, &c.;  
 and petitions from inventors, and applica-  
 tions for charitable subscriptions, and folio  
 sheets from persons who had been aggrieved  
 and craved the favor of an interview to  
 relate their trouble; and heaps of invita-

tions requesting the honor of M. le Mar-  
 quis's and M<sup>me</sup>. la Marquise's company to  
 various festive entertainments. Finally,  
 there was a missive dated from Hautbourg  
 ou the Loire.

"I wonder what possesses those people  
 to write to me with such importunity,"  
 broke in Horace, whose attention had not  
 been very well sustained up to that point,  
 but who shifted his place impatiently when  
 Angélique read the heading of the letter.  
 "There's not a day passes," added he, "but  
 I get a petition from one of those Haut-  
 bourg burgesses. They seem to fancy I  
 am a free agent in this matter."

"This looks like a round-robin," said  
 Angélique, gently.

"Ay, that was inevitable. They have  
 got to round-robins now. We shall have  
 deputations of them next."

Angélique continued to read. The me-  
 morial was signed by influential citizens.  
 Ballanchu, seed-merchant, Market Place;  
 Scarpin, boot-maker, Rue de Clairefon-  
 taine; Hohepain, tax-gatherer; Duval,  
 hotel-keeper; Toulmouche, Truchepoule,  
 and Follavoine, farmers, and many more  
 of the same eminence. It set forth in  
 humble language that Hautbourg did not  
 despair of seeing its ancient lords return  
 with splendor to fill the home of their  
 forefathers, but that whether the ancient  
 lords did so or not, "we, the undersigned,"  
 ventured to submit that there was a means  
 open by which the Marquis of Clairefon-  
 taine might confer both a great honor and  
 a great joy upon the town. The general  
 elections of 1857 would take place within  
 a month or two, and it was to be presumed  
 that M. le Marquis would stand again for  
 the city of Paris. But there was nothing  
 to prevent his being put up in nomination  
 at the same time for Hautbourg, so that,  
 should the Parisian Constituency "fail to  
 do its duty,"—which Heaven forbid!—  
 France might not be deprived of M. le  
 Marquis's valuable presence in the Na-  
 tional Assembly.

Whereat Horace fell a-thinking. What  
 if the Parisian Constituency *should* fail to  
 do its duty? The thought of the general  
 election had never presented itself to him  
 in that shape before; yet his colleagues,  
 he knew, were already busying themselves  
 about their own constituencies, and the  
 papers told him every day what desperate  
 efforts the Liberal Opposition intended  
 making to secure the return of "uncompro-  
 mising" candidates. It was not likely that  
 he would be regarded as uncompromising—  
 he whom the Liberals accounted as a black  
 sheep. There would even be some incen-  
 gruity in saying, "Here am I, a Republi-  
 can, the Marquis of Clairefontaine, who

live in a palace, exchange bows with M. Gribaud, and get on capitally with all the legislators who are keeping my country under the gag." The press would laugh in his face, and the small boys in the streets hoot him. Then, what chance had he of winning his seat by the same sleight-of-hand sort of performance as last time? Why, his majority was not two hundred votes, and at the next election, if the Opposition put forward some name less revolutionary than Albi's, more Liberal than his own — which would not be difficult — all the votes he should get would be those of his personal friends, and those of the Bonapartists — though how to accept these latter a second time without presenting himself frankly as an official candidate, and hopelessly damaging himself as a Liberal forever after, was a point which now began to appear to him in the light of a problem. Insensibly he was led into reflecting on what his position might have been had he never known M. Macrobe, but followed the career he had at first marked out for himself — that of a hard-working barrister. He might have been the rising hope of the Liberals by this time. Albi would not have dared — perhaps not have sought, to hinder his election, and, if elected once, he need have had no fears at future contests — for it is especially in electoral matters that possession is nine points of law.

The familiar acquaintance of M. Macrobe must have seemed a very insufficient compensation to him for what he had lost, since the picture he evoked drew from him something like a sigh; and his mind must have been very full of an image other than his wife's, since it did not even occur to him that, had his first projected destiny been accomplished, he should never have known Angélique!

He was plucked from his meditations by the question, submissively put, "What answer must be given to this, Horace?"

"What is your own opinion, child?" he asked, with a quick, searching look at her whom he was thus interrogating for the first time on a matter of importance.

There was anxiety in his glance. He was gauging the measure of his wife's intelligence.

"Why, dear," said she, a little troubled, and during rather plaintive looks at the letter, "I see they are kind people, who wish you well. But" — She caught the words "Paris" and "re-election," — "you will be re-elected at Paris, I suppose?"

"It is not sure."

"But why not?" And her blue eyes expressed grave astonishment.

"They say that I am not Liberal enough — that, because I choose the friends I

like, and wear a name that is mine, and am not churlish as a bear to those who are civil to me, and do not flatter the people, I am no true man."

Her small hands clasped themselves in a sort of silent perplexity, and a little sigh broke from her.

"I wish, Horace, I understood these political questions; but when I try, it all seems darkness. I thought you were more Liberal — as you say — than all the other deputies together, and I am *sure* you must be, despite all that unkind people may think. Why," added she, looking up, "at the President of the Chamber's last party M. Gribaud told me you were an incorrigible Radical. He was laughing, I know; but he must have meant part of what he said."

"Yes; but this is an affair of optics. The gray silk dress you are wearing looks pink from this side, where it faces those purple curtains, and opal-tinted from the other, where it has the sun's rays on it. M. Gribaud and the Liberals consider me from opposite points of view.

She did not appear to understand, but continued, with some concern beginning slowly to depict itself on her features, — "But if you are not elected at Paris, Horace, you will be without a seat."

"Yes, I suppose so, and my political career will be broken, unless, indeed, I hack myself out as an official candidate to M. Gribaud. But that is a trade that brings a man a little too low. I would rather take to one of my old vocations — pleading, or scribbling, or even starving, which is sometimes synonymous."

This time she understood and changed color. Besides the loss of position, there was another to which Horace had not alluded, the salary of twelve thousand five hundred francs which deputies received. Though Angélique's experience of money matters was absolute null, she vaguely knew that her husband was morbidly scrupulous that every centime of the interest derived from her dowry should be expended on herself; he himself confining his personal expenditure — the keep of his brougham, pay of his valet and secretary — within the eight or nine hundred pounds, made up of the above twelve thousand five hundred francs, of three thousand francs a year, the allowance his father gave him, and of three or four thousand francs which he continued to earn by occasional anonymous contributions to the "Gazette des Boulevards." So the first thing that struck her in connection with Horace's possible failure was the diminution of comfort that might accrue to him as a consequence. She saw him discharging his brougham or disbanding his

valet or some such catastrophe; and therefore exclaimed in distress, "Oh, but, Horace, you will answer Yes to this letter, won't you? They are good-hearted people at Hautbourg, you see—they will elect you, and not cause you the annoyance which these Parisians do. Besides"—(for one of M. Macrobe's oft-repeated injunctions was recurring to her)—"Besides, Hautbourg is your own town, after all; that of your family I mean; and it is quite right they should do something for you after all that your family has done for them."

"Well, they complain that my family are starving them now."

"Yes, but that is not your fault: you said so just now."

"And what if they and I should not be of the same political opinions?"

"But Hautbourg is in the country; there will be no politics there," she rejoined seriously. "And they will be of your opinion if you go down and talk to them; and if you promise that you will return to live with them some day, which I know you will do if you can; for, indeed, dear"—and she glanced up at him artlessly—"I don't think it can so much matter about the castle having been built by negroes."

Horace gave a puzzled stare, then laughed, and, stooping, kissed her. But aside, he moaned and recalled the poor child's past words; that day when she repeated to him so earnestly that Georgette was much cleverer than she. The fact is, all that Angélique knew of the Clairefontaine business, was what her father had told her; and he, not sanguine of ever being able to make her comprehend all the details of the secret he had learned from Horace, had put the thing into a nut-shell, by telling her that her husband's only prejudice against Clairefontaine was its having been reared by blacks—which she had believed calmly, as she would have believed any other thing, possible or impossible, that he might have told her.

"We will send the answer to Hautbourg another day," said Horace, grave again; "it deserves to be pondered over;" and he glanced through the memorial himself, and thoughtfully examined its large, straggling circle of signatures, something like a congregation of clod-hoppers dancing in a ring.

There remained two letters to be read. Both were from persons acknowledging and accepting invitations to a dinner at Macrobe House—invitations issued by Angélique, at M. Macrobe's desire, in her husband's name and in her own. These disposed of without any remark on Horace's part, Angélique sorted the letters that required answers from those that did not,

those that were to be replied to in the affirmative from those that were to be negatived, and so on, all for the convenience of the secretary. The sun played upon her pure features, and cast a halo over her golden hair, as she noiselessly did this, and Horace, had he looked at her, might have been reminded of some Madonna of Raphael engaged in domestic work, but he had taken up his "Moniteur" again, and was trying to decipher a leader on some treaty question in which the words "balance of power," and "M. Walewski," "supremacy of France," and "Napoleon III." were blurred by, and mixed up, with the names of "M. Macrobe" and "Hautbourg," "Tenth Circumscription," and "Georgette," so as to render the whole not very intelligible. Angélique, having arranged her letters, glided back to her book, and beginning the same chapter over and over twenty times, never succeeded in dissociating Paul from the Italian Opera, and Virginie from a private box, when she saw a rival in a box opposite and her husband beside her fascinated and troubled by the sight of that rival.

The silence was hardly interrupted until the discreet clatter of silver and china which heralds the luncheon has made itself heard in the adjoining breakfast-room. Horace was not a luncheon-man, holding by the old French system of late breakfast and clear day till dinner-time; but lunch was a transmarine institution which served to bring all the members of the Macrobe household together for the first time every day, and led to varied conversation on the morning's events and plans for the afternoon and evening. Accordingly, when the major-domo announced "Madame la Marquise est servie," Horace prepared to go through the ceremony of shaking hands with his father-in-law, making his bow to his aunt, and being greeted affectionately by his cousin the Crimean hero, who was always demonstratively charmed to see him.

"Bonjour, belle cousine," exclaimed this distinguished officer, advancing with an enormous bouquet as Angélique entered with her husband. The nosegay was of white and dark violets, redolent with the perfume of budding spring.

"You have been to the flower-market, cousin," she said, thanking him, and inhaling the fragrant breath of the flowers.

"No, belle cousine, a country ride. A spurt straight away into the meadows, as if I were charging Cossacks; and, by the way, Marquis, I met a friend of ours as I was returning. It was on the Meudon road. A tremendously swell trap was cavalcading in the dust like the Pope's

mule-coach on a gala-day, so I reined up, ready to salute if it should be king, emperor, or field-marshal. But it was the Prince of Arcola, draped in a swallow-tail, like a Roman in his toga, and looking whiter than the lawn cravat he was sporting. If his servants hadn't been so spruce and shiny, I'd have wagered he'd been to a funeral. But I daresay it was worse: he may have been to a christening."

"Meudon," said the financier, sitting down to table. "Perhaps the Prince was simply on his way from a call to the Pochemolles, Captain."

"A morning call in black and white, sir, with a powdered periwig on the box, and two pairs of pink silk calves holding on behind! That would be prince and magistrate with a vengeance. Yet, I don't know" — (He unfolded his napkin.) "We saw monsieur in the same box as the Torche—Toche—what is it?—Porche—molles last night. Maybe he had been offering his coronet to that handsome girl with the red lips, whom the marchioness admired. If so, it looked for all the world as if she had said to him what my colonel did to me last time I asked for more furlough.—Ma cousine, I have a *mayonnaise* of lobster before me, will you allow me to send you some?"

The captain's light words struck two at least out of the four persons seated round the table much deeper than he fancied. Angélique found the getting through her *mayonnaise* a rather difficult operation; and Horace, who had not been able to restrain an abrupt raising of the head at the mention of the Prince's name, hurried over his glass of hock and biscuit, and withdrew much earlier than was his custom, to go down to the House. On alighting, however, before the Palace of the Assembly, he did not go in, but dismissed his coachman, and when the brougham was out of sight, walked up and down on the pavement for a few minutes in evident doubt. He was flustered and uncertain. He knew that the Prince must have been proposing to Georgette; but what answer had she given him? Could it be true that she had refused him, and if so why? He was surprised at the vehemence with which his heart beat at the thought that Georgette was possibly still free. He turned the thought over and over in his mind, and the more he did so, the more pleasure it gave him. At last he said: "If I could only know for certain"—and as this perplexing reflection occurred his eye lit upon a cab that was plying desultorily for hire along the quay. He hailed it and jumped in. Once seated, he appeared to hesitate, and pressed his hand to his eyes; but on the driver asking him

for the second time, "Where to, sir?" he answered rapidly,—"To Meudon."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### M. MACROBE'S ASPIRATIONS.

A FEW hours after Horace had started for Meudon, M. Macrobe might have been found in his study. The time of evening six o'clock, the curtains drawn, a warm fire shedding its glow on the hearth, and the low moaning of the February wind audible outside through the closely-barred windows. M. Macrobe, just returned from his office, sat poring over his desk and making what seemed to be abstruse calculations in pencil on a sheet of paper. Open before him lay a ponderous folio ledger, extracted from a strong cupboard with an iron door, and locks enough to defy all the burglars in Christendom. This ledger was marked on its chamois-leather back, "*SOCIÉTÉ DU CRÉDIT PARISIEN*."

Everybody in Paris, and in Europe, too, for that matter, talked about this "*Crédit Parisien*," and appeared knowing about it. Its shares were quoted at London and New York, Frankfort and Rotterdam; it was extolled in the money articles of the leading journals in these respectable cities; and in Paris—"sceptical" Paris—the confidence accorded to it was so entire that any person hinting his dissent would have been eyed askance, and found himself in a hopeless minority, and been held up to contumely. But the best of it was, that when you came to inquire into the titles of the *Crédit Parisien* to be regarded with esteem and proclaimed the pride and pinnacle of financial enterprises, nobody could enlighten you. Jules had bought his shares because advised to do so by Alphonse; Alphonse had speculated in deference to the loudly-expressed opinion of Antoine; and Antoine had expressed himself loudly because a certain Auguste, who knew a certain Achilles, had gathered from the latter the unshakable impression of a certain Ulysse, himself a director in the concern, that the *Crédit Parisien* was the safest investment going. So that, reduced to its simplest terms, the fact amounted to this—that the *Crédit Parisien* grew and flourished, and absorbed the economies of high and low, of senator and concierge, of washerwoman and ballet-girl, and blazed at the top of the share-list, and occupied with majesty the place of honor in money articles, because it enjoyed the unlimited confidence of its own promoters.



It seems that there are, or have been, a considerable number of credit institutions based upon the same sort of solid foundation as this; and under the circumstances, the only wonder is, not that a desultory joint-stock promoter should now and then be signalled landing at a foreign port with the funds of some eight or nine hundred share-holders in his carpet-bag, but that the whole universe should not blossom over with migratory promoters like a fruitful tree with caterpillars. In short, it is a marvel that humanity itself should not be divided uniquely into two categories—the one jovial and replete, having fattened itself with promoting, the other reduced to a condition of hunger, collapse, and manual labor, by a wilful, incomprehensible, and utterly guileless course of shareholding.

On the earth's surface there was, probably, but one man who really understood the *Crédit Parisien*, held all the cues of the enterprise in his hands, and knew to what extent the public were dancing on a volcano in trusting to it, and this was the much-respected chairman and chief promoter, M. Macrobe. Of course his co-promoters, the directors, were supposed to understand and hold cues, and all the rest of it, but they didn't—which is not a rare occurrence with those who are supposed to know things. M. Macrobe had originated the idea of the *Crédit Parisien* at a fortunate moment. On the morrow of the *coup-d'état* of 1851 there was a large and most interesting class of persons, who, having previously never possessed a centime, found themselves suddenly raised to posts of honor and emolument. These persons, whom a factious opposition styled adventurers, but whom history, more impartial, designates simply as Bonapartists, with more loyalty than small coin, were, not unnaturally, desirous to place their private means as soon as possible on a level with their public position. M. Macrobe had stepped in and suggested the way. Being known to most of the new dignitaries intimately—having, indeed, trodden the shady paths of Bohemianism with some of them—he was able to point out in the confidential language of friendship, how superfluous a thing is capital when one holds such an excellent substitute as place, and the special information it gives access to. What else he added—what alluring prospects he flashed before yearning eyesights—are secrets locked in the bosom of mystery; but the upshot was, that one morning the *Crédit Parisien* rose like a star in the east, and that forthwith it fared well with it. For the Company bought land in Paris, and lo! by a strange coincidence, a new boulevard would soon after be constructed thereon and quintuple the value of the land:

it bought ships, and behold! the new line of packets was scarcely inaugurated, before it obtained Government contracts for carrying mails, transport of troops, laying down of submarine cables: it purchased houses, and straightway the Government found it necessary to expropriate these houses as sites for barracks, churches, theatres, for sums double or treble what they had cost. Perhaps it may be remarked that this mode of making money has a suspicious look of kinship with the time-honored expedient of winning a game by means of loaded dice. But to such unsophisticated objections it will be enough to reply that hazard is often a strange thing; that men high in office are always maligned; and that if it certainly did happen that a few eminent functionaries, suspected of occult connection with the *Crédit Parisien*, became unaccountably prosperous in a surprisingly short space of time, there is nothing in this circumstance which may not have been purely fortuitous, or a simple freak of chance.

Anyhow, hazard or no hazard, M. Macrobe, as he dotted down his calculations, and threw occasional glances at his ledger, looked well pleased enough with the business in which he was embarked. The shares were at 1,550 francs; the evening paper showed a new rise of 5 francs that very day.

"There is no reason why this should ever stop," muttered he half aloud, "except that nothing here below is perpetual. So long as the Government holds its own, and keeps the Budget from being overhauled by a set of factious Radicals, we shall do. Our sources of information are inexhaustible for the moment."

He turned over the leaves of the ledger and came to a series of pages entitled "Names, Professions, &c., of Original Shareholders." It was singular the array of Duvals and Leroyes, Joneses and Browns, Müllers and Bauers, who were inscribed as holding the greatest number of shares, and more singular still were the vague addresses of these Duvals and Müllers, Joneses and Leroyes. But doubtless there was a key to this in the asterisks prefixed to most of these apocryphal-looking names, and in a small volume with a lock to it which the financier drew from a secret drawer, and began to con musingly, comparing it with the larger book.

"Some of them," he murmured, "have sold out and bought in again several times, making good hauls by each transaction, which is not difficult when one can foresee the rises and falls on 'Change a day or two before the rest of the public. Others have kept firm hold of their shares, and will probably sell out when we reach two thousand, which, considering they had their

shares for nothing, will also be no bad investment. What a list of names they are, and what a pretty sensation it would cause if these columns were published some morning in the papers! Um! it's my life-preserver, this book. If ever things turned out badly, I should only have to threaten with it—the Second Empire could better stand a revolution than the printing of such pages. But things won't turn out badly in my time. No"—he closed the small book—"when the smash comes, if come it do, I must be clear out of the concern. I don't see why the affair ever *should* smash, but these giant enterprises, that run such a whirlwind, pace to begin with, always do. Nature seems jealous of greatness; great empires, great men, great companies, all break up before the time. I must hie me away to some secure position whilst the *Crédit Parisien* is still in its heyday, and there will be nothing suspicious in my retirement. I must get into power. Why shouldn't I? This is a reign under which a man of brains can hope for any thing."

He laid down his pencil, threw himself back in his chair, and rested his chin in his hand.

"There are so many ways of getting into the Ministry or the Senate nowadays, and such curious fish slip in there! But my plan was as good as any. With Horace Gerold in possession of Clairefontaine, we could both of us make our own terms with Government. The Clairefontaine influence would be enough to insure our both being returned for the department, and then he, as a Duke of Hautbourg, might blossom out into an ambassador, by and by into a minister for foreign affairs—dukes are the very men for those posts when Government can prevail on 'em to accept them. As for me, I should not be long in the House as an independent member, before Gribaud came over to me and offered me my own conditions. Gribaud doesn't like me—in fact, he doesn't like anybody who has a longer head than his own; but he recognizes merit when he sees it, and if I struck for a seat in the cabinet, minister of finance, trade, public works, or something in that line, or for a barony and a senatorship, he's not the man to say me nay. But if he did, it wouldn't matter. Gerold and I could put ourselves at the head of a dynastic-opposition party, accepting the Emperor, but attacking the ministry; it might rally forty or fifty adherents after the next elections, and lead Gribaud the very deuce of a life. I should get what I wanted then, in spite of Gribaud, perhaps by overturning him—who knows? Ministers are never thoroughly popular either with their masters or their followers. And all this might come

to pass within a few months of this, if Gerold had a little nerve in him! He's not much of a fellow, and it's uphill work leading him to where his own interest lies. Let us re-read what Louchard says."

M. Macrobe selected a letter from a portfolio in his pocket. The envelope was franked, not stamped, which indicated its administrative origin. It ran this wise:—

"PRÉFECTURE DE POLICE, Feb., 1867.

"MONSIEUR,—One of my men has just returned from Hautbourg, where, under the guise of a commercial traveller, he has been sounding the opinions of the principal townsfolk with regard to M. le Marquis de Clairefontaine, your son-in-law, and pursuing your instructions as conveyed to me verbally last time I had the honor of an interview with you. He has suggested that the townspeople should separately and one after the other appeal to M. le Marquis, and collectively offer him the candidature at the elections, which has been, or is being, done. My agent reports, however, that public feeling in Hautbourg is the reverse of favorable to M. le Marquis and his family, and that his candidature would have little chance of succeeding if the Government were to oppose it. Supposing M. le Marquis were installed at Clairefontaine the case would be different; it seems the town and all the country around have been accustomed to take their cue from the Castle, and would be quite disposed to continue that course. I enclose, by your desire, the bill of expenses incurred by my agent, and await, with respect, your further orders. But I would beg again, as a favor, that you would not let anybody into the secret that I have placed myself at your services for these negotiations, the Government objecting most strongly to the interference of the police in private concerns.

"I have the honor to remain, sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"MOISE LOUCHARD."

"I am sure I don't know what further orders to give," resumed M. Macrobe. "Short of bringing the whole borough of Hautbourg down by special trains to memorialize him, we have tried almost every thing without effect. Angélique has no influence over him. He is fond of the child, I know, but treats her like a wax doll. By the by—ahem!" (M. Macrobe frowned)—"I must have that jolter-headed captain sent back to his regiment. He is getting on too fast with his 'Ma belle cousines' and his nosegays; I don't understand these modern husbands; they allow their wives to be made love to under their very noses. No; Angélique has no influence

over him, nor have I beyond a certain point. He feels as we do; he would like to go to Clairefontaine, but daren't because of his father. What a man that father of his! To have an estate of that value, and to pour the revenue every quarter-day into the poor-box. There is some sublime lunacy amongst those old Republicans! Then he seems to be tough, too, the old fellow; his health is all right. Um! how it would solve matters if he were to retire opportunely to a better world!"

The jasper-faced clock on M. Macrobe's mantle-shelf tinkled the half-hour after six, prelude to the note of the dinner-gong, which sounded at seven. The financier restored his papers to their drawers and his ledger to its cupboard; locking and double-locking the latter with a key no bigger than his little finger, pygmy driver to such Brobdingnagian bolts. Then he went and leaned against the chimney-piece, and repeated thoughtfully: "How it would solve matters!"

It may be said that the words were yet on his lips when the house-door bell was rung with violence, startling the echoes of the silent vestibule and corridors. It was one of those unusual peals that bring a presentiment of something unforeseen. M. Macrobe started, and listened, motionless. A servant quickly crossed the hall, the door was opened, and, after a moment, footsteps were heard going in the direction of the reception-rooms. Then the servant appeared, and said: "Monsieur Emile Gerold is in the drawing-room, sir, and would be glad to see you for a minute, if you are disengaged."

Monsieur Macrobe, with his pulse at ninety, went to the drawing-room.

Emile had never thawed much in his reserve towards his brother's father-in-law. Their mutual relations were ceremonious. But this time there was nothing but unaffected grief and impulsiveness in the young man's manner as he advanced and said: "Do you know where my brother is, M. Macrobe? I have news which should be communicated to him at once."

Angélique, who was present, and looking with alarm at Emile's discomposed features, answered: "But Horace must be at the House. He left to go there at two."

"No: I have been to the House," replied Emile. "They told me he has not gone there this afternoon; — at least, he went, but left immediately in a cab, and a link-man heard him tell the coachman to drive to Meudon. I thought he might have been back."

Absorbed and bewildered as he was, Emile was struck by the sudden pallor that overspread Angélique's face at the mention

of Meudon, and by the way in which she pressed a hand to her side, as if to stop a sharp spasm.

"I hope there is nothing wrong?" began M. Macrobe with concern. "Horace will certainly be back for dinner. No bad news I trust?"

"Our father has been taken ill," said Emile in a voice that he endeavored to keep steady. "I trust the illness is not serious, but I have been apprised of it by telegraph, and must start for Brussels this very evening. There is a train at eight. I came to fetch Horace so that we might go together."

"He will undoubtedly go, and I will have some of his things packed for him," said Angélique, rising, with a look of sympathy surmounting the evidences of the shock she herself had just received. "But," added she, with unwilling bitterness, "if Horace is at Meudon, perhaps a messenger had better be sent for him: else it is not sure he will be back so soon."

"I am unfeignedly grieved to hear that your excellent father should be unwell," exclaimed M. Macrobe, dolorously, though inwardly that worthy man seemed to be reflecting how inscrutably providential are the ways of Fate.

"I don't think it is possible to send to Meudon and to return in time for eight," ejaculated Emile, glancing regretfully at his watch. "I must leave a note, and" —

"There is a noise of carriage-wheels," interrupted Angélique, listening, and going to the window. "This is, no doubt, Horace."

Emile sprung out and met his brother as he was descending from his cab. Horace wore the look of a man who has just passed through keen emotions, and is not prepared for more immediate trials, but, seeing Emile's face, he paused on the doorstep, and faltered: "You have bad news, Emile?"

Emile took his arm, and handed him the despatch.

"This is a visitation," exclaimed Horace, hoarsely.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### ONE GOOD MAN LESS.

THE Brussels of the Second Empire — a sentinel city perpetually on the watch: on the watch for all sorts of things; — for the whim of that Unfathomable Tenant of the Tuileries, which might bring an army of

four hundred thousand Frenchmen within sight of its Brabantine streets; for a revolution in Paris, which might drive away the Unfathomable Tenant, Heaven knew whither, and empty the Brabantine streets of the Republican refugees, who clustered thick within their attics as mice in corn-lofts; for the British regiments, which some thought would come, and some were persuaded wouldn't, if the integrity of brave Belgium were ever menaced.

And meanwhile, that is, pending these contingencies, Brussels looked like a pocket-edition of Paris. Its streets were as clean, its boulevards as trim, its cafés as jingling and full of chatter, as those of the elder sister-city, and the Brussels theatres gave French pieces, and the Brussels publishers sold pirated editions of French novels, and the Brussels learned societies extended hospitality to proscribed French *savants*; and the Brussels people wore French hats, and grinned before the print-shops where, to the great disgust of the French Ambassador, figured comical cartoons, representing the Emperor Napoleon, and practised parliamentary government, and venerated the honest man and true gentleman who was their king, and eschewed revolution — for Belgians are Frenchmen, with the froth taken off.

In a secluded street of the Faubourg Ixelles, which is to the radiant quarter of the Place Royale, what the Quartier de Mont Parnasse is to the Parisian Champs Elysées, and decent Chelsea to proud Belgravia, stood the small house where Manuel Gerold was lying.

These houses were not built on the French system — of six stories, a large door, and a porter in a lodge to take care of the door. The architects of the Faubourg Ixelles have studied in England. There structures are the three-floor lodging-houses we all know, and miles of which may be seen in all the London suburbs, where "*Lodgings to Let*" stares cheerlessly on stiff cards out of parlor windows. There is always a woman with a hot face who answers the doors of these places, and a cat who comes purring behind, rubbing her sides along the walls of the narrow passage, and a smell of dinner steaming up from some underground recess; and, when you have examined the bleak parlor and chilly bedroom — limp white curtains to the bed, and blue pattern wash-hand basin — it is always the same reply: "The sitting-room and bedroom, sir, will be fifteen shillings a week. Fire and lighting hextra."

Horace and Emile were driven up to a house of this model as day was dawning, rather after six. At the time they lived in Brussels with their father, their lodgings

had been elsewhere, so that they did not know this house.

The hot-faced woman who opened the door for them was, in this instance, a girl, down at heel, with cheeks puffy, and eyes blinking from having been started out of sleep, and compelled to huddle on her clothes in a hurry. She guessed who the young men were, and making a pretence of washing her face with her sleeve, whimpered dismally: "He was took ill, gentlemen, all of a heap like. The doctor's with him, and have not left him since. It was him as sent the despatch to Paris."

Receiving but a muttered answer, she closed the door behind them, and, in hushed silence, the whole party proceeded up a creaking staircase to the sick-room, which was on the highest story, and looked out on a gray back-yard. A night-light was flickering feebly in a saucer, and vying in sadness with the leaden hue of the morning sky. The ashes were cold in the grate. The furniture, of the commonest, barest kind, scarcely gave an inhabited look to the chamber, and the poorness of the place was discernible in such tokens as the cracked cup that had been used to pour medicine in, and the battered tray on which were the remnants of the doctor's supper. It was not a room to live in, much less one that should have been a home during illness; but when it was remembered that the occupier of this poor apartment was a man who had held the coffers of a nation in his keeping, who had discarded a colossal fortune because he thought that he could not honestly touch it, and who, though he possessed a competence that would have enabled him to live at ease, preferred pinching himself in order to have more to give away amongst needy fellow-refugees — there was something indescribably great in all this misery. The poverty-stricken room ceased, then, to be a garret — it became a sanctuary. Nevertheless, when Horace saw this desolate scene a great sob escaped him, and he threw himself weeping on his knees by his father's bedside.

Emile, less demonstrative in his grief, grasped the hand of the doctor who had been sitting near the head of the bed, and in a sorrowful whisper asked him for particulars, and for a word of hope.

The doctor was a short, gray-haired man, with round eyes and rather lugubrious ways. In a tone of condolence he said what he knew. Manuel Gerold had been struck down suddenly by paralysis — that grim foe to men of mind; which lies in ambush for them treacherously and lays them prostrate as with a mace. Ever since the attack he had been in a state of

coma. The usual remedies had been applied and he might revive; or, he might pass away unconsciously, like a man in sleep. He was a refugee, too, this doctor, and spoke of Manuel Gerold with something of the devotion of a soldier for a great, and revered chief.

"I have observed a decline in his health for the last twelvemonth," he murmured, shaking his head. "It came on slowly, but it was marked. He no longer smiled, and his gait had lost its elasticity."

Emile shivered and drew nearer to the bed. He wished to prevent his brother from hearing. But the doctor unable to divine and prone to diagnostic talk, like most of his cloth, pursued innocently.

"The symptoms of incipient paralysis were all there. It is the most insidious of diseases. I had seldom seen a man more vigorous in mind and body for his age than your father; but for this vigor to remain unimpaired to the end, there must be a complete absence of all shocks to the system. Men who undergo the natural infirmities of age will bear up better against certain chance accidents, than these exceptional and overwrought organizations will. I have known feeble old men pass unscathed through physical and moral trials that have proved fatal in cases where the constitution of the patient was seemingly stronger; whence I infer that strength of body or of the mental faculties can only be prolonged beyond their accustomed time at the expense of the nerves. Your father was highly impressionable. You are not cognizant of his having experienced any great sorrow or disappointment during this last year?"

"No," said Emile, and taking one of his father's unresisting hands in his, he gazed with hot tears in his eyes at the saddest of all wrecks; that of a loved being, of a great, good man. Oppressed breathing, as though there were some heavy weight on the chest, and flushed features, told, indeed, that this was sleep and not death in which Manuel Gerold was plunged. But what a sleep this, whence the slumberer can only awake to vacant-minded senility! Is not death a thousand times preferable?

The two sons sat watching beside their father all the morning. The doctor, who had gone through a thirty hours' vigil and was knocked up, though he refused to own it, went home, leaving directions as to what was to be done in different contingencies, and promised to return in the evening. Then the hot-faced servant girl re-appeared dressed properly, but grimy, from lighting the kitchen-fire, and asked whether the gentlemen would take any thing; and soon after came her mistress, a hot-faced, warm-

hearted Walloon lodging-house keeper, with a bowl of arrow-root which could be of no possible use to any one, but which she placed nevertheless on the table with an air of profound conviction, as if it were instantly going to set every thing to rights. And then began the trivial, worrying, shabby round of incidents of which lodging-house life is made up; incidents all audible in the sick-room. The call for yet uncleaned boots by the first-floor lodger; the lamentations of second-pair back, who wanted to shave himself, but had not got his hot water; the ring-a-ding procession of tradesmen at the front door, and their confabulations with the mistress about the last joint, which has proved to be three ounces short when weighed in the larder scales, and amidst all this, the re-entry of the hot-faced girl with a slip of paper, saying that this was the day when M. Gerold was used to pay his washing-bills, and please, was she to tell the laundress to call another time? In which manner the forenoon glided by.

But at one, the Walloon landlady, with cheeks aglow, a tray laden with omelette-au-lard, and bottle of Macon on her arms, and a proclamation of beefsteaks to follow on her lips, swept into the adjoining sitting-room, and, resolutely laying the cloth, declared that if the messieurs did not eat, there would soon be three patients in the house instead of one. So Emile and Horace had to take their respective turns of sitting down and attempting to swallow, whilst their entertainer discoursed with a well-meant kindness, which deprived them of every vestige of appetite they might have possessed, on what a good gentleman their father was.

"I never saw a gentleman that could talk so, nor look one so gently in the face," said she, warming up into emotion; "and you should have seen how his purse was open to everybody that had need, ay, and to them that hadn't. Why I've counted as many as a dozen come here of a morning with begging letters, stout, strong, good-for-nothings too, some of them, who ought to have been ashamed to take money which they hadn't earned. It was the same story with all. They were Republicans who had been exiled from France; and I'd have told Marie to republicanize them with the broomstick if he had let me. But he always had a kind word to say for them: they were hungry, or persecuted, or what not, and so he used to work all day, and the better half of the night, and deny himself and starve himself to make money for the vagabonds. Ah, saving your presence, sir, you gentlemen are simpler than us women; it's not a woman that would have allowed herself to be taken in in that way."

This was quite true, that Manuel Gerold had worked indefatigably. The heaps of books and manuscripts in the room bore enough evidence to the fact. It was a plain sitting-room, but more habitable than the bed-chamber, from the books just mentioned and from portraits on the wall, prints before the letter most of them, and representing well-known Republican figures: Lamartine, Arago, Beranger, Dupont de l'Eure. They were all signed, these portraits, with some such dedication as *souvenir d'amitié* or *homage affectueux*. Then there were a few keepsakes of a more curious kind: a framed sheet of paper with a quill pen attached to it, and underneath: "*Que mon ami Victor Hugo veuille bien certifier que cette plume lui a servi à écrire quelques pages de ses immortels 'Châtiments,'*" to which Victor Hugo had subscribed a large "*Oui;*" a crucifix given by Lamennais; an unedited ode to Liberty in Beranger's own hand; a group of terra-cotta figures of the Provisional Government of 1848 by the caricaturist Dantan, humorously but good-naturedly conceived, Manuel Gerold being shown in the act of striking the fetters off a slave, who, to reward him, was picking his pocket. This group, by the way, was lettered: "*En matière de Gouvernement, faut de l'honnêteté; pas trop n'en faut.*" The numerous book-shelves revealed the only real luxuries of the apartment — rare editions of old works, and richly-bound volumes of modern authors, the latter gifts for the most part from the authors themselves; also, what Manuel Gerold must have considered his most precious treasure, from the prominent place he gave it, a unique copy of Montesquieu's "*Espirit des Loix*" presented by the compositors of Paris after a speech delivered under the Restoration in defence of the liberty of the press. The compositors had printed this one copy of a unique quarto edition on vellum, and then broken up the type. It was more than a kingly gift, for kings never make such presents; it was a people's gift. On Manuel Gerold's desk lay the unfinished manuscript of a political essay he had been writing at the moment of his attack, with the pen lying slantwise on the blotting-book as it had fallen from his fingers, and a large blot beneath to show that when the pen had so dropped it was full.

When the landlady had at length retired, leaving Horace alone — for Horace had lunched after Emile, in order that both should not be away together from their father's bedside — he looked with dim eyes and yearning heart on all the objects in this modest room. But what moved him most was an album he found on the writing-table filled with newspaper cuttings relat-

ing to himself and Emile. There was his own maiden speech in the *Affaire Macrobe*, as reported in a Belgian paper, with a laudatory leader, and all the articles he had written in the "*Sentinelle*" and "*Gazette des Boulevards*;" but here the cuttings as regarded himself stopped. There was no account of his election, no report of any of his doings in the Chamber, no notice of his marriage; and these could not have been chance omissions, for the extracts relating to Emile's speeches at the Palais de Justice continued uninterrupted, the latest of them being but a few days old. Horace would have given a great deal at that moment could he have expunged the whole of his life during the last twelve months and brought himself back to the point denoted by the date of his last newspaper article. The silent censure implied by the exile of his name from this album during the past year cut him to the quick. "And yet," thought he, dejectedly, "what have I done? I accepted Bonapartist alliance to win a victory against a man who had goaded me to madness, but I have performed my duty in the Chamber as well as he would have done. He might have advocated liberty more rantingly than I do; he could not have pleaded for it more earnestly. Then I married, and that they seemed to think was another crime. But I imagined then, that I loved Angélique. In fact I do love her, but — but —;" and his mind strayed excitedly to a scene enacted not four and twenty hours before, when he had called at Meudon, seen Georgette, and being alone with her, had pressed her for an explanation of her coldness towards him in such terms as to bring down an explosion of impatience and anger. Georgette, beside herself, had spoken all that was in her heart, not upbraiding him indeed for his faithlessness to her — she was too proud to do that — but doing what women do, taking up a line that was no business of hers, and taunting him with uncontrolled bitterness and scorn for having married a woman whom he could never have loved, all on account of her money. Upon which, he, stung and infuriated by the unjust accusation, had retorted as a man never should retort upon a woman even when she is a hundred times in the wrong. He had made capital out of the unfortunate Filoselle, cast the jilting of that individual in her teeth, and left her speechless under the reproach that she too must have been actuated by a sordid motive, some scheming after a richer lover, in acting thus faithlessly. Altogether it had been a miserable scene of which it made him redder to think. And the more so, as he said to himself, that there was a time

when no woman or man would have deemed him capable of the baseness Georgette had imputed to him; and when he himself would have suffered his tongue to be cut out sooner than to use it in insulting a defenceless girl as he had done. He experienced that undefinable feeling of having fallen in the estimation of men generally, and of being lowered in his own; yet without being exactly able to perceive why.

Emile's voice calling to him in a low tone from the bedroom aroused him. Manuel Gerold had shifted his head on the pillow, his breathing was less heavy, and the inflammatory hue of the complexion seemed to be subsiding. Horace hastened in, and the two brothers watched anxiously the signs of returning life. The patient's movements were those of a man trying to shake off in sleep fetters weighing down the whole of one side of the body. It was only the right side that could move, the other was inert. At one time it seemed as though the attempt must be a vain one, and exhaustion paralyze what little strength remained in that once robust frame. But gradually — though this was the work of hours, not of minutes — life resumed a sluggish course; the blood slowly deserted the head and flowed to the extremities, a feeble but restoring stream, and, just as dusk darkened the small window of the room, with its drab clouds, Manuel Gerold opened his eyes.

At almost the same minute the doctor returned.

The brothers were leaning over their father in watchful suspense, to see if he would recognize them. Horace passed an arm under him, and propped him up gently with pillows.

"Father," said Emile, "do you know us?"

Manuel Gerold turned his eyes vaguely from one to the other, going through the efforts that follow the awakening from a long and painful dream. There was a hushed stillness whilst he labored to join together the broken threads of memory. At last a ray of consciousness stole over his features, and he strove to speak; but the sounds that left his lips were inarticulate, the tongue appearing to roll heavily, like a once strong bark that has lost its rudder. The endeavor was renewed, once, twice, but without success, and then a look of distress painted itself over the old Republican's face.

The doctor approached with a cheering word, and felt the patient's pulse. The examination did not last above a minute, but when the doctor turned there was a verdict in his eye. He silently withdrew into the next room to leave the sons alone with

their father. His science could be of no further help here, and he knew it.

"Father, do you feel pain?" asked Emile, trembling in every limb.

Manuel Gerold made a sign that he did not.

Horace lowered his head, and, after a struggle with himself, faltered: "Father, if I have done any thing that has displeased or grieved you; if I have — if I have acted otherwise than as you would have had me act, will you tell me that you forgive me?"

Manuel Gerold fastened on his eldest son a glance full of mournful affection; and the tear that glistened in his eye and then coursed furtively down his wan cheek showed that the forgiveness sought had been given and given over again long before it had been asked. But at this same moment the old patriot's countenance became illumined as it were with a brightness not of this earth: there was no mistaking the presage. Both sons sank on their knees.

Emile happened to be on the left side of the bed, so his father laid his sound hand — the right — on his head in a mute, parting blessing. Simultaneously he strove to do the like with Horace, but his left hand refused its office. There was something plaintive in the look of embarrassment and sorrow that flitted over the dying man's brow as he recognized his inability to do what he desired. He summoned up all his remnant of strength in a last effort: but it was to no purpose. The attempt only exhausted what little strength yet remained in him. His head dropped softly back into his pillow, and he passed away.

So Horace rose from his knees without feeling his father's dying hand pressed with a benediction upon him as Emile had done.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### REQUIESCAT.

WHEN all was over, when the body had been laid out, and the landlady, subdued and crying, had placed upon the table the usual sad ornaments of Catholic death-rooms — the two lighted tapers, the crucifix, the cup of holy water with sprig of blessed box-wood; — when the priest had arrived who was to watch all night by the body and pray for its departed soul, Horace sat down at his father's desk to write a line to Angélique, apprising her of his bereavement. He had promised her to write,

whatever happened, and it was more in redemption of this promise than out of any natural impulse that he took up his pen. This was the first time that he had ever written to Angélique, and the words "your affectionate husband" looked strange to him on the paper. Angélique his wife, and the daughter-in-law of him who had just gone to rest? He could only dimly realize this two-fold relationship. The truth is, a woman is only half a wife who is not recognized by her husband's family, for the union between man and wife can never be complete if they do not love the same people, if a death that bows down one of the two with grief leaves the other indifferent. The terms of Horace's letter, which would have been tender and confiding had he been addressing one sure to feel as he felt, were necessarily cold and brief. As he wrote, his pen was clogged by the thought: "What can she care about this death, she who never saw my father, and had no reason for liking him?"

The next day there were those customary steps to be taken which relieve the mind of some part of its load of grief by occupying it. The declaration of the decease had to be made at the Mairie, the orders for the funeral to be given, the funeral letters be issued to friends, and, also, there was the will to be read; for, abroad, this formality does not follow the burial, but precedes it.

It was a very short and simple will, which a Brussels notary brought and read out before the two sons, the doctor, and a clerk, who came as witness. The date was of about six months back:—

"I, MANUEL GEROLD, called by some Duke of Hautbourg and Clairefontaine, being of sound mind, declare that this is my last will and testament; and I hereby cancel all wills made by me prior to this date.

"I request that my body may be buried in the foreign land where I may die, and this without pomp of any kind: Let my hearse be such as is used for the poor, and let no monument be set over my grave, but only a plain stone with my name.

"Should France become a free land again during the lifetime of my sons, they will be fulfilling my very dear wish if they disinter my remains and transport them to the cemetery of Père-la-Chaise in Paris, beside those of my beloved wife; but so long as my country is ruled by its present Government I desire to rest, as I have lived, in exile.

"I bequeath all my books, papers, portraits, and personal property generally to my two sons, Horace and Emile, to be divided between them as they mutually shall

determine; and I desire that the income derived from the sale of my literary works shall, so long as the copyright of those works remains by law the property of my heirs, that is, for the term of twenty-five years after my decease, be divided annually into three equal parts: one part for my son Horace, another for my son Emile, and the third to be devoted to some liberal and charitable object: that is, either to the relief of men who have suffered for their political convictions, or to the assistance of enslaved nations who shall take up arms for their emancipation. And I appoint, as trustees of this fund, my son Emile and my friend Nestor Roche, to whom I bequeath as a token of my esteem and affection the copy of Montesquieu's "Esprit des Lois" given me by the compositors of Paris.

"At my death my son Horace will inherit the title of Duke of Hautbourg. I desire that he will consult only his own choice as to adopting this title, or suffering it to remain in abeyance, for in these matters the convictions of one man cannot and should not influence those of another. Let my son only remember that when a man assumes a great historical name he enters into a tacit covenant with his ancestors to keep it pure from all stain.

"I beg that my friend Nestor Roche and Maître Devineck, notary at Brussels, will act as executors to this will; and I sign in the humble faith of God, and the belief in an immortal life,

"MANUEL GEROLD.

"10th September, 1856."

Horace listened in silence to the reading of this will, which Maître Devineck scanned with monotonous solemnity, as if he were perusing a *capias*. He could not be insensible to the passages which revealed how much his father's confidence in him had been shaken, and his mortification was increased, if possible, by the embarrassment of Emile, whom the substitution of Nestor Roche's name for Horace's as co-trustee of the charitable bequest truly surprised and grieved. This will could only have been written in an hour of dejection, perhaps of physical suffering. In his usual mood of health and kindness, Manuel Gerold would never have put this slight upon his son, nor offered him such a serious rebuke as that implied in the paragraph relative to the title. So reasoned Emile, but his tongue was tied, for before he could venture on any consolation Horace forestalled him, and said resignedly: "Our father judged me like the rest. Don't let us ever talk about this, Emile. I bear no rancor, for I loved my father with all my heart; but



some of the men in this Republican party poisoned his mind against me. It was just like them. You saw he died without giving me his blessing" —

The funeral had been fixed at a week's interval from the decease — this by request of a large body of refugees, who said that numbers of Manuel Gerold's political friends would come from London, Geneva, and from France itself to give him a parting token of respect. Horace was not much disposed at first to listen to these men, who arrived by scores every day to leave their cards, asked to be allowed to view the body, and did not kneel before it, being mostly "free-thinkers," and who treated him — Horace — with a cold and studied civility of which it was impossible not to divine the meaning. He remarked to Emile, that as their father had desired to be buried without pomp, there would be some transgression of his wishes in suffering the funeral to be made the pretext of a great Republican demonstration. But Emile interpreted the absence of pomp to mean merely simplicity in the arrangements; no plumes, emblazoned catafalque, or mourning coaches, nothing but the plain hearse which the will mentioned. Horace asked if there would not be something like the pride that apes humility in the contrast of a pauper's hearse with the position which Manuel Gerold once held, and with the immense concourse of mourners who would follow him to his grave. He submitted that if the burial had been strictly private, a poor man's hearse might have been suitable; but that if a great public procession were to be organized, it would look less ostentatious to have the funeral conducted in the usual middle-way class, not pompously but becomingly. Emile, however, was too sincerely a Republican to indorse these sentiments. He could not see that there was any vanity in using a pauper's hearse when one was not a pauper. Every party has its foibles, and Republicans dearly love a little Spartanism. Accordingly Horace gave in, and the hearse that drove up to the door of the lodging-house on the appointed morning to convey the great tribune to his last home was a common one of black wood, open to the four winds, devoid of trappings, and drawn by a single horse.

The evening before, the brothers had received the visit of a Brussels commissary of police, who came with the scared countenance which Belgian officials always wore when their country was being made the scene of any episode likely to displease the great Emperor of the French, to say that the projected demonstration seemed much more important than had been contemplated — whereupon he nopped his brow with a

red cotton handkerchief. "Refugees were arriving by all the trains, and from everywhere; an enormous number of French Liberals had also come by the last expresses from Paris, and the French Government, as usual, had sent a good many spies to accompany these Liberals, and to attend at the funeral, to hear what they might say. It was too late to ask the Messieurs Gerold to alter any of the arrangements, but the commissary hoped that they would kindly exert their influence to have as few speeches as possible pronounced over the grave, and, above all, to have those speeches moderate; it was the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs who requested this as a very great favor."

Horace would have promised readily enough, if Emile had not interrupted him by inquiring somewhat excitedly of the commissary if Belgium were not a free land.

"Alas, yes!" answered that official; "a free land, bounded on all sides by the French ambassador."

Which meek reply disarmed Emile, though, said he, they could promise nothing, for it was not their part to dictate to their father's friends what they should or should not say.

At which the commissary bowed; but added, dolefully, that he hoped the Messieurs Gerold would not view it as a mark of disrespect to their father if the Belgian Government took precautions against order being disturbed on the morrow. And these precautions consisted in six policemen, who came to the door at the same time as the hearse, with black thread gloves on, and appeared extremely anxious not to offend anybody or to stand in anybody's way.

The commissary's evaluations as to the number of people who would swell Manuel Gerold's funeral train were not exaggerated; only, the concourse, from its very vastness, was, contrary to his timorous expectations, an orderly one. At ten o'clock, a score of the leading French Republicans — great names, all of them — who had been deputed to act as pall-bearers, entered the house between two dense but silent rows of spectators, bordering the street outside, and claimed the honor of carrying the coffin themselves to the hearse. It was a plain deal coffin, painted black, but it was not unadorned, for the wives and daughters of the refugees in Brussels had sent that morning a velvet pall with a cross embroidered by their own hands, and a beautiful wreath of white camellias. As the coffin issued through the door every head in the street was bared; and when Horace and Emile took up their positions behind the hearse, they noticed that in every hand was a

crown of yellow *immortelles*, to be laid by and by on the grave.

The hearse began slowly to move; but it was not one thoroughfare alone that was lined with spectators. As street after street unwound itself before the gaze, rows upon rows of people appeared, standing in black, with heads uncovered, and these wreaths of amaranths in their hands. There were not a few women in the crowd, who were crying; and here and there a Belgian soldier, who respectfully made the military salute. As the hearse passed, the throngs of mourners in perfect order and with a mechanical sort of discipline left the pavement, and formed themselves in rows ten abreast in the rear of the procession. This was done at every step, at every foot of ground along the road, so that the cortège, gathering in depth and strength as it advanced, like a river swollen by tributary torrents, numbered thousands by the time the church was reached. All the shopkeepers on the line of the procession had put up their shutters, and every house, without exception, had its blinds drawn. Emile's tears rained fast, warm tears of thankfulness and pride; Horace was ghastly pale. What were the splendors and triumphs he had been courting beside this unparalleled homage offered to the memory of a man who had simply remained true to his faith?

At the church there was a halt. The building was too small to contain a tenth part of the concourse; so only the pallbearers and the first two or three hundred in the close-pressed ranks went in, the rest remaining stationary in the road with imperturbable patience. Contrary to what the brothers had any right to expect from the price of the funeral, all the clergy of the church were assembled in the chancel. This is usually a matter of money, there being more or less priests according to the sum paid by the undertaker; but there is nothing so much flatters foreign clergies as a great Republican dying religiously and being buried pursuant to the ritual of the Catholic church: wherefore the priests of St. X—, ever full of tact, as all their order are, had waived the pecuniary question in this case, and mustered together twenty strong to impart unusual solemnity to the obsequies of Manuel Gerold. Also, the choir were at their post, but strengthened, as the custom is on such occasions, by some singers of the Brussels opera, who had volunteered their services, and sung magnificently the "*Dies Iræ*:"—

"*Dies iræ, dies illa,  
Solvat sæculum in favilla.*"

*Tuba mirum spargens sonum  
Per sepulchra regionum,  
Coget omnes ante Thronum."*

The grand verses of the old anthem pealing under the sacred vault, stirred hidden echoes in the breasts of many unbelieving there present. When this was terminated, and the absolution had been given, and the coffin was being borne out again, whilst the organist filled the church with the divine sounds of Mozart's "*Requiem*" Horace turned with his brother to follow out the pallbearers. As he did so he caught sight of a figure standing with eyes, or rather spectacles, downcast, and an air of devout unction, amidst a group of Parisian Liberals. He knew the face, but without being instantly able to recollect where he had seen it. In another moment, however, it flashed upon him: the spectacles and the false mustache did not much alter the physiognomy. It was the honest M. Louchard: and on either side of that worthy stood the two acolytes MM. Fouineux and Tournetrique, who had assisted him in the domiciliary visit to Horace's rooms.

Once more the procession started on its course, and again it was swelled by increasing troops of mourners, until it gained the Cemetery of Laeken, outside Brussels.

The hearse passed the gates, and debouched into the long avenue of white tombs, and then, for the first time, the immense host broke up, spreading like a black sea over the whole of one side of the cemetery—everybody being anxious to secure a place near to the grave.

The hearse, with a few score followers, branched off the main highway, threaded some by-paths, and reached its last halting-place just as the crowd had settled down—a countless multitude choking up all the footways, covering the tomb-stones, standing on and clinging to monuments, and stretching in a compact, surging mass as far as the eye could see.

The coffin was lifted out, and the priest recited the final prayers, and a "*De Profundis*." Then the coffin was lowered with a grating sound of ropes, the parting "*Requiescat*" was pronounced, and the priest withdrew. At that moment, when a deep hush fell upon the whole assemblage in expectation of what was to follow, the scene was an imposing one.

Above, the sky glistening with a pale gold sunshine, and those opal tints which clothe the heavens at that neutral season when it is no longer winter, nor yet quite spring; below, this ocean of human faces, the majority of which belonged to men who had devoted their lives to an idea, who had been persecuted for that idea, but who were sustained by a profound unwavering faith

in the future ; in front of them an open pit, with the coffin, and on the coffin a handful of clay.

A man stepped out of the throng on to the brink of the grave, and began to speak amidst a silence so intense, that a pebble, which rolled from under his foot, and dropped on the coffin with a hollow sound, was heard distinctly by everybody.

The orator was a man of world-wide fame. He had swayed assemblies, and his words struck upon responsive chords, awaking long and but half-suppressed murmurs of assent as he confessed the creed that bound them all there together, and uttered the praises of the honest, steadfast Republican they were met to mourn. To him succeeded a second speaker, and then a third — each of whom paid feeling tributes to the patriot, who had been the glory of his own generation, and would be looked back to as an example by those to come. And these speeches, which made the temples of Emile throb, and poured balm upon his wounds, fell like lashes upon Horace. Every word rang as a reproach in his ear. The speakers seemed to revile him, to point ironically to the contrast between him and his father. He fancied that all eyes were fixed upon him with wondering contempt, and when he tried to look up he could not ; his glance was anchored by shame to the ground. Suddenly he started, and raised his eyes, flashing and astounded, upon the fourth speaker.

After the third oration there had been a pause, for it had been in some way settled that three speeches only should be delivered ; but, just as that hum was commencing which precedes the disbanding of a multitude, a small wild-haired man had elbowed his way to the front, and, by a gesture of his hand, rooted everybody to the spot.

It was Albi.

As well nigh all the spectators knew of the enmity between him and Horace Gerold, astonishment and curiosity, not unmingled with apprehension, broke upon every face, and the people pressed forward closer as if they were nudging one another.

Albi paid no heed, but, in quick, dry, fevered accents, began a panegyric of Manuel Gerold more glowing, more heartfelt, more thorough, than any which had been pronounced before. But there was the exaltation of a fanatic in the burning phrases, and when the orator had emptied his heart of all the good in it the fanatic's mania for invective re-took possession of him. His voice became sardonic, like a trumpet that cracks, and undeterred by the sacredness of the spot — forgetting it, indeed, and all laws of humanity — consulting only his political passion, his spleen, his hatred, he

turned his eyes to where Horace stood and regretted aloud that Manuel Gerold had left no son — or, at least, but one son — who could follow in his footsteps.

Horace watched Albi as a leopard may eye a panther. He had submitted to a great deal. To the coldness of his father's admirers, to their ill-concealed scorn of him ; to their speeches, in which — without meaning it, possibly — they had trampled all his self-respect under foot ; but nobody could expect him to stand this.

At the first words of Albi's speech he had clenched his fists, and held in his breath, and now that the man was doing what he expected he would do from the first — slaving his venom over an unclosed tomb — he sprang forward, and shouted, " Silence ! "

A thunderclap bursting abruptly overhead could not have produced a greater commotion.

" Silence ! " repeated Horace, in a furious voice, " who are you that come to speak beside the grave of an honest man ? Manuel Gerold had nothing in common with Republicans of your sort. You and your fellows belong to no party. You murdered the first Republic, you ruined the second, and if our country is fettered now it is that Frenchmen prefer despotism to the crimes and follies by which you have rendered freedom hateful. Stand aside ! Patriots should shun you like a pestilence, for you and those who think like you are the enemies of the human race. " And as Albi continued to stand where he was, Horace laid a hand on his chest and pushed him roughly back.

A great clamor arose, and immediately there was a dismayed rush to keep the two men apart. Numbers of acquaintances whom Horace had not noticed in the crowd, Nestor Roche, Jean Kerjou, Claude Febvre, M. Pochemolle, Mr. Drydust, the black-clad commercial traveller Filoselle, held him back, Emile aiding ; and another throng, amongst whom Max Delormay was active, did the same with Albi. But Albi, glaring and mad, shook himself free, and, rushing to his antagonist, hissed : " The men who belong to no party are those who will sell themselves to any. They are the harlots of politics. Prostitute ! " and he spat in Horace's face.

Horace sprang from the hands of those who were restraining him, like a lion through a thread net, and clutched Albi by the throat. The two men closed and wrestled ; and, amidst the appalled cries of thousands horrified by this frightful scene, both fell and rolled headlong together into the open grave, on to the coffin at the bottom, which crashed under them.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## DECLARATIONS OF WAR.

M. GRIBAUD, the Minister, was out of sorts again. Not that the Corps Législatif had voted against a Government bill, or evinced any inclination ever to do such a thing; but an individual member of that Assembly, a square-headed Alsatian count, Protestant and gaiter-wearing, had taken him privately to task in a rich German brogue about certain abuses flourishing in his department, to wit, the appointment of Catholic school-masters in purely Protestant parishes. M. Gribaud had answered that if the noble count would examine well, he would, no doubt, find in other parts of France Catholic parishes blessed with Protestant school-masters; but the noble count had shown himself sceptic on this point, adding that even if it were so he saw nothing to admire in the arrangement. M. Gribaud was not much used to these replies, the less so as the count had given him to understand, in accents more and more Rhenish, that the support he vouchsafed to the Government was quite conditional, for that he was sure to be re-elected by his Lutheran constituency whether the "administration" liked it or not — and hereupon had stalked away. Scarcely had this unsatisfactory episode been enacted than another nobleman-deputy had supervened — this time a Gascon marquis, Catholic to the roots of his red hair, and twanging his words gayly through his nose — to ask that his brother might be made a bishop. Now there was not the slightest reason in the world why this marquis's brother should be made a bishop, though there were numerous reasons against such a course. But as the marquis himself had been made a deputy for no cause whatever, it was quite natural that he should suppose the same qualifications would do for his brother; so that on being rather curtly denied what he wanted — for smooth-speaking was not M. Gribaud's forte — he had turned on his heel in a huff, mumbling meridional expletives sulkily. "This comes of having land-holding aristocrats in the Chamber," growled M. Gribaud, rolling homewards in his brougham. "It's the hobby of the court, not mine. If I had my way we should send the departments their deputies as we do their prefects and their dancing-dogs, all ready reared and trained in Paris. Manufacturers make the best deputies. All they ever ask for is to be decorated or ennobled, which costs nothing. Or, failing manufacturers, I'd have sportsmen; they let one alone and have no religion."

M. Gribaud reflected in this strain dur-

ing his dinner, and again after it. The evening was that of the day of Manuel Gerold's funeral, and happened further to be that which M. Gribaud devoted every week to the reception of his political adherents, masculine and feminine. The saloons were always crowded to suffocation on these auspicious nights. M<sup>me</sup>. Gribaud was "at home." Diamonds twinkled by the myriad, laced uniforms blazed in dense battalions, veteran functionaries trod on the distressed skirts of heated dowagers hopelessly jammed in impassable doorways, and younger functionaries, with the administrative bloom still fresh on them, breasted their way through avalanches of snowy shoulders, embellishing but obstructing the staircase. M. Gribaud, in a swallow-tail coat, with much gold to it, a red ribbon and star, and his hair brushed, stood on a hearth-rug and smiled a welcome to the company as they defiled before him. But when M. Gribaud was not in a good humor these smiles much resembled those which a man, who has a whitlow on his hand gives, when that hand is warmly squeezed.

M. Gribaud had returned about a dozen hundred bows and stretched as many of these yellow smiles just alluded to, when he became aware of the presence of M. Macrobe, who was performing a worshipful though collected obeisance to him. M. Macrobe ought by rights to have been at Brussels attending the funeral, but having heard that there was to be a great Republican demonstration, and feeling small inclination to figure in the midst of such an assemblage where he was not likely to be regarded with deep sympathy, he had sent an excuse to his son-in-law pleading a convenient indisposition. At the same time, as he much desired to see M. Gribaud on behalf of his son-in-law's interest and his own, he had come in the hope of obtaining a few minutes' talk with his Excellency, and was not disappointed.

"How do you do, M. Macrobe?" growled the Minister, holding out his knotty hand, which now that it was covered with a white kid-glove, looked every moment as if it was going to burst; and he eyed the financier with an interrogative glance which seemed to say: "I wonder what this rogue is going to tell me this evening?" But, suddenly, as if recollecting something, he added: "By the by, what is that Brussels telegram in this evening's paper?"

"I am sure I don't know," answered M. Macrobe, whose countenance wore an air of perplexity. "I have no further details than your Excellency has. The despatch is very summary and only says that there

was a disturbance at the funeral between my son-in-law and M. Albi."

"And that there was a tremendous discourse at the burial," grumbled the Minister, and he led the way to a table in an embrasure where lay some evening journals. Some other guests in the room seeing the Pillar of Politics and the Pillar of Finance, engaged in loving converse, withdrew discreetly out of earshot. "Yes, you see, there it is, a countless multitude, all Brussels afoot, democratic speeches and the rest of it. Manuel Gerold was a great fool; I used to know him well. He might have become a minister like me if he had liked."

"But he had the infatuation to prefer being an exile."

"And that's a form of vanity like any other, M. Macrobe. I'll wager the man thought he stood higher on his pedestal than any of us."

"There's no accounting for opinions, your Excellency. But I am glad that his eldest son shows but slight disposition to follow his example. I desired to speak to you about him this evening. Taking the newspaper account as it stands, I gather that my son-in-law has had some brutal affront put upon him and that the breach between him and the Opposition will be widened beyond mending."

"So much the better."

"As your Excellency says, so much the better. My son-in-law has become Duke of Hautbourg now, and under that new name I trust to see him begin a new and more becoming life. At the approaching elections I look to his standing for Hautbourg, and soon we may count upon seeing him return to the Castle of Clairefontaine and take his proper rank in the world. Your Excellency will not, I hope, throw any impediment in the way of the Hautbourg election?"

M. Gribaud's face assumed a cold expression, but without beating about the bush he replied:

"I am beginning to ask myself what Government is likely to gain by furthering the Clairefontaine scheme, and I fail to see our advantage in it." His voice grew business-like. "When first you broached the subject the conditions were not what they are now. Young Gerold was an adversary who was giving us trouble. It was essential to suppress him, and we should have done so, had you not proposed to win him over to our side. But he is harmless now, thanks to the way we managed that last election. The Liberals have cast him off, and if Government does not give him a lift next time, it is not difficult to see that he will be left without a seat."

"Perhaps he might not be returned for the Tenth Circumscription," said M. Macrobe, beginning to look blue. "But he would be safe of winning the seat at Hautbourg if the Government helped him."

"But why should we help him?" responded the Minister, gruffly. "He has never joined our ranks as you promised he would. All he has done is to tone down his speeches a little; but what we want are not deputies who tone down, but deputies who don't speak at all, at least against us."

"Everybody cannot turn his coat in a day, your Excellency," answered M. Macrobe, with half a sneer.

M. Gribaud was generally as thick-skinned as a rhinoceros where epigrams were concerned, but this time the barb penetrated a little too deep.

"A man cannot turn his coat too soon who has begun by wearing it wrong side out," he rejoined with a scowl. "If young Gerold will accept an official candidature on the usual terms, that is, issue an address that we shall dictate, and pledge his word to vote as he is told, we shall not oppose him. But his support must be unreserved. We certainly shall not help him to get into the House as an independent member." And M. Gribaud folded and refolded the newspaper he was holding in a deliberate way that signified: "This is my ultimatum."

"Then am I to understand that in the event of the Duke refusing these conditions, which he naturally will, the Government will contest the seat of Hautbourg?" asked M. Macrobe, gazing uneasily into his opera-hat, as if to ask counsel of it in this emergency. "I beg to remind your Excellency," he resumed, "that the death of M. Manuel Gerold has removed what I believe to be the last obstacle in the way of my son-in-law's assuming his estates and adopting the rank that belongs to him; and that as Lord of Clairefontaine the Duke of Hautbourg will be in a position amply to repay any courtesies that may be shown him at present."

"I should be sorry to speculate on any gratitude of that kind," muttered M. Gribaud dryly. "I know it was a seductive scheme that which you first unfolded, of winning over young Gerold to us, getting him to put his name and landed influence at our service, and so on, but these projects never become facts. Landed proprietors are the stubbornest cattle in existence; you can't drive but must forever be coaxing them. Why, two of them bandied words with me this very afternoon."

And at the recollection of his Alsatian Count and Gascon Marquis, M. Gribaud grew agitated, and stuttered indignantly:

"Two beggarly clod-crushers whom we had put into the Chamber out of charity, simply that they might have a decent salary to add to their trumpery rents, and this pair come lording it over me, threatening me with their displeasure, and all because they know that the peasant electors vote stubbornly at each election, as they did the time before, and that to turn a landed proprietor out of the seat you have once allowed him to occupy is about as pleasant a job as trying to root up a live oak with a pocket-knife. May the deuce take them! But if these two, with their five hundred acres apiece, feel independent enough to bully in this style, what can the Government expect of the owner of such a holding as Clairefontaine?"

"All the more reason for not offending him," suggested M. Macrobe shrewdly.

"There would be reason enough for not offending him if young Gerold were already in his castle; but he isn't. Hark you, M. Macrobe," broke off the Minister, recurring to his favorite method of going bluntly to the point: if young Gerold returns to Clairefontaine he will have no need to come begging our support, for we should give it him as a matter of course, there being no use in doing otherwise; but you have your doubts about this return, and you apparently count upon the Hautbourg election to advance your aims. Well, I wish you good luck; only, you won't get any thing else from us. For the moment young Gerold has ceased to be a danger to us, and that is all I wanted. As Duke of Hautbourg and Lord of Clairefontaine he would certainly become troublesome again, so that to help him thither would be uncommonly like sowing stinging-nettles on my own path. I've given you our terms — unconditional surrender on Gerold's part, or else war."

"Then I think we shall have to accept war," said M. Macrobe with a feigned laugh on his lips, but a gleam in his ferret eyes. "Your Excellency will excuse us if, when our turn comes, we give no quarter."

M. Gribaud assumed the Olympian attitude — half wonder and half grim contempt — of Jupiter hearing himself defied by Mercury.

"Why do you say, *we*," M. Macrobe? he inquired. "Do you intend opening hostilities on us, too?"

"I am in the same camp as the Duke of Hautbourg, your Excellency," was M. Macrobe's curt rejoinder.

The scowl on the Minister's countenance deepened abruptly into a glare. Some of the coarse aggressiveness of the old days when he was a blustering criminal-court barrister rose to his tongue, and was only

repressed with an effort. He laid one of his huge white gloves on the financier's arm, and, first looking round to see that there was nobody at hand, said in a husky voice: "Don't you think this is enough fooling, Macrobe? Do you fancy I don't know how the *Crédit Parisien* is kept on its legs?"

Why, man, beware what you are doing in taking up the cudgels against us, for we could smash your company like a filbert, and you with it, so I give you warning."

But he found more than his match in M. Prosper Macrobe, who shot back his answer like a dart from a bow.

"I dare you to do your worst, M. Gribaud. You can smash the *Crédit Parisien* if those of your colleagues who are interested in its welfare will let you; but you can't smash me, nor even injure me in reputation or in fortune. And let me tell you this — that if those whom you serve were ever driven to choose between offending me or dismissing you, it is not me whom they would deem it most prudent to sacrifice. So it is for you to beware and take warning."

And with a disdainful shrug he strode away, leaving his Excellency disconcerted.

So disconcerted that left alone M. Gribaud began walking straight ahead in a purposeless sort of way through the crowded rooms, his gilt sword-sheath beating on the thick calf of his leg, his cocked hat crushed under his arm, and his hands pinching each other and cracking each other's kid teguments behind his back. Before him, as he advanced, the subservient throng parted in two rows of bowing heads right and left. But many a sub-prefect, who had come up to town to urge a claim to promotion, many a fair dame who had decked herself in her gayest robes and softest looks to wring from the great man's generosity a post of emolument for her husband, brother, or peculiar friend, forbore their suits on marking his Excellency's eyes fixed with no inviting expression on the carpet. Mechanically M. Gribaud made a series of curt bows as he proceeded, throwing them at hap-hazard to any one who chose to take them, as one flings halfpence amongst rabble. Then, presently, he stopped, having caught sight of a brother statesman making himself agreeable to a bevy of ladies on an ottoman.

A glance from his chief brought this eminent politician to M. Gribaud's side. He was a lanky celebrity with not more than half a nounce of hair on his head, and that half-ounce dyed coal-black. His mustache and tuft were of the same jet. He had false teeth, wore a double eye-glass on the bridge of his nose, and evidently considered himself handsome. Rumor affirmed that he

had been appointed minister because his aunt — But this is beside the question. He simpered to M. Gribaud, who at once whispered to him: "I say, De Verny, you have shares in the *Crédit Parisien*, have you not?"

The coal-black dyed colleague changed color a little, and exclaimed, "Yes; but how do you know?"

"Well, you see I do know; but there is nothing to be ashamed of in the matter. Only, if I were you, I'd sell out."

"Why, is there any thing wrong?" and the dyed one's visage lengthened of a sudden, visibly.

"No, not as yet. But of late these joint-stock companies have been running riot. Paris has become a gambling hell. In high quarters they don't like it; they say it gives a raffish color to the *Dynasty*." Here M. Gribaud lowered his voice and muttered some words scarcely audible. "So you see," he resumed, "if it should ever be necessary, for form's sake, to make an example, we must be certain that the company we attack hasn't any of our own men on its books. I don't say the *Crédit Parisien* is in any danger, but you would be doing wisely to cut the connection. One never knows what may happen."

And two minutes later M. de Verny might have been seen scuttling down stairs to his carriage, with what little hair remained to him standing up on end, oblivious of the bevy of ladies on the ottoman, and bent only on gaining the *Cercle Impérial* to see if perchance he might find his stock-broker there, and instruct that worthy to sell out to-morrow morning — the first thing.

Further on, M. Gribaud observed a second brother statesman, who had just been treating himself to a glass of Malmsey, which was good at the *Hôtel Gribaud*, as are most wines purchased with the money of the tax-payer. This second statesman held his head high, as if there were a set of plumes on the top of it, which was the more imposing as he could hardly have measured five foot one, boots included. Almost the same dialogue ensued as before, with this difference in the results, that at the first mention of the *Crédit Parisien* the small gray head crested with invisible plumes sunk to below the owner's shoulders, causing him to look forthwith as if he had lost a cubit from his stature. M. Gribaud re-assured him, but said: "Doesn't that long bit of land that skirts the fortifications in the *Faubourg M* — belong to the *Crédit Parisien*, and wasn't there a talk of buying it for Government magazines?"

"I believe there was," replied the second statesman, rather sheepishly.

"But the bargain isn't struck yet?"

"No, the affair was to be concluded next week. A very good affair for every one concerned."

"Well, I think it had better stand over. There's no great hurry for magazines, and I don't think the site a good one."

And five minutes afterwards the second statesman might have been seen hurrying through the hall of egress, and leaping into his brougham like the first, with brow knit and thoughts intent upon selling out there and then, if by chance a buyer could be found.

M. Gribaud continued his walk, glad within his soul at what he had just done. But he felt the need for a little rest and diverting talk, so he raised his eyes and cast about him for a likely guest, that is, one who would converse with him without asking him for any thing.

A few of the ambitious sub-prefects, accepting this look as a hint that M. Gribaud's glumness had quite melted away, smirked forward precipitately. But his Excellency rebuffed them with a hasty "Good-night — good-night," uttered in the same tone as the "Down, Dash, down," with which we regale an affectionate dog who jumps upon us with muddy paws; and so passed on till he beheld that valuable member of the *Corps Législatif*, the fig-nosed Planter, who had escorted Mrs. Planter to the entertainment, and seemed to be enjoying himself thoroughly, being profoundly asleep in a corner; and not far distant from this legislator, the Prince of Arcola, a little languid, but sociable, and conversing with a lady. There was no hesitating between these two. If he awoke the fig-nosed Planter, that deputy would infallibly ask for promotion in the *Legion of Honor*; so M. Gribaud made for the Prince of Arcola.

The Prince was chatting with Madame de Masseline — the lady who rendered important services to the cause of order, as represented by M. Louchard, and the *Préfecture de Police*. She was a brilliant dame, with winning manners, eyes like sloes, and pretty confiding ways, that convinced every man she desired to pump that her one fond wish was to nestle under his strong arm, and unfold to him the whole tale of her chequered existence. Man being the silliest of bipeds, this stratagem never failed, so that, in half-an-hour, she had generally coaxed out of her interlocutor all she cared to know, and restored him to Society squeezed morally flat as a biffin. Nevertheless, though there was not an event occurred within Paris but that she was as familiar with all its details as though she had been on the spot and taken ocular notes, yet it was part of her delightful system to feign ignorance of every thing; and she

would go into little ecstasies of wonder to hear that it had rained in the morning; clasp her charming hands in amazement at learning that So-and-So — whose wedding she had attended — had just been married; and exclaim, in her silvery tones, "Dear, dear! that's news, indeed!" on being apprised that her own husband — every one of whose steps in this life she had directed — had secured an honor or an appointment, which she herself had obtained for him. Women saw through her, called her an odious, mischievous, affected thing, and detested her. She returned the compliment, and in the prettiest way possible, without seeming to be aware of what she was doing, would pick the most virtuous woman's reputation to bits in five minutes — leaving not so much of it as would suffice for the needs of a courtesan. For all of which things men adored her, stoutly took her part when she was attacked by her own sex, and gave her credit for all the innocence, good-nature, and candor to which she chose to lay claim.

The Prince of Arcola was one of her admirers; or, rather, she was one of the thousand women to whom the Prince had, at different times, paid a languid court, without ever being able to make up his mind to love one of them. Indeed, the principal secret of the Prince's attachment for Georgette was that women in society seemed to him so similar — that is, so uniformly pretty, frivolous, insignificant, and wax-doll-like, that it was impossible to choose between them. It had required a woman who was not of his class — who contrasted totally with all the women he had ever seen — to fire the latent spark in his amative, but rather *blasé*, heart; and his rejection had been such a blow to him, that the first remark Madame de Masseline made when, obedient to her beck he had subsided into a seat beside her, was, "Mon prince, you are becoming Byronian. You wear a tired, disenchanted look, as if you were joining the horrible army of misogynists."

He smiled rather wearily, but answered gallantly, — "If ever I take to hating women it will be when you have left P. P. C. cards on us all, which will be never — at least, in my time."

Madame de Masseline being of that elastic age called thirty-five — that is, by her own computation, seven or eight years the Prince's senior — viewed this as a compliment, and replied mincingly, with much fluttering of her fan, and sparkling of her dark eyes, — "Well, that's pretty, and more like yourself. But I am sure my poor prince, you have some *peine de cœur*. Ah! what a tyrant the heart is. How it does

make one suffer. I have often thought we should be better without hearts — I know I should. For instance, *She* must have no heart — I mean that cruel creature, who is making you look so — so — interesting."

"Oh, yes, she has plenty of heart!" rejoined the Prince, naively, "but not for me."

"Then she has none for anybody else, you may depend upon it, unless she be blind, or deaf, or both. Perhaps she is." And she laughed, beating her skirts down, and moving her chair a little, so as to make more room, and said sympathizingly, — "Draw nearer, mon pauvre prince, and tell me all about it. You and I are old friends, and can confide our sorrows to each other with Platonic affection."

Men are never quite insensible to the interest which pretty women pretend to take in their affairs. It is an old, but not the less true, saying, that the surest way to flatter them is to talk to them about themselves. Moreover, it relieves a sorrow to confide it to a commiserating listener.

So the Prince acknowledged, with tolerable frankness, that he had been wooing, and failed. He omitted, of course, all mention of names or particulars that could put his hearer upon the right clew; but this happened to be quite a superfluous precaution, for Madame de Masseline was acquainted with the whole story from first to last. The Pochetmolles had been far too much dazed by the offer of the Prince's hand to their daughter to be able to hold their peace as to the fact. Even when the refusal of Georgette had plunged them abruptly from the seventh heaven to the seventh region of Hades, they had found no rest until they had asked all their kinsfolk and acquaintances to condole with them in their sore trial. And thus the story was beginning to filter its way through Paris with the proverbial rapidity of all such kind of news, and Madame de Masseline, according to her wont, had been amongst the first to be informed of it.

She ignored, however, wherefore the Prince had been refused; so, on learning it from his own lips, exclaimed, with an astonished sigh, "Dear, dear, how shocking! Loved some one else, did she? — and that some one else a married man. That is always awkward, because a man of wit has but one revenge open to him in such a case."

"And what is that?"

"Oh, you are pretending to be more innocent than I!" said she, simulating an air of bashfulness, and giving a tinkling little laugh. "Why, what was it the Duke of Richelieu said? 'When a married man crosses my path, I make love to his wife — on principle.'"



"The Duke was evidently wittier than I am," sighed the Prince; "but I might fare no better with my rival's wife than I did in the other quarter."

"Impossible to be more modest. But don't you long for revenge of some sort? You talk with distressing placidity about your rival. I should not deem that flattery if I were the lady in the case."

"I have no great love for my rival if that is what you mean," answered the Prince, and he knit his brow. "I am certain he has not behaved well. He deceived the— the lady, and he deceived me; for I asked him before proposing, whether some suspicions which I had were founded, and he swore to me they were not. But the only revenge we witless men can resort to in such a contingency is not to believe the purjurer again, and to show him that we do not."

It was at this moment that the Minister Gribaud loomed in sight, steering straight for the nook where the two were seated.

"How provoking! Here is that wretched mummy of a Grand Vizier coming to break our *tête-à-tête*," muttered Mdme. de Masseline, pouting, and the same instant, with a charming smile,—"This is an un hoped-for pleasure, your Excellency. I was just saying to Monsieur le Prince what a delight it is to get a few minutes of your society; but it is so rarely one has that good fortune."

"Your humble servant, madame," grunted M. Gribaud. "Good-evening, mon Prince;" and he took a chair with the air of one who says, "I know this woman is humbugging me, but it does no harm."

"We were talking about the elections," resumed Mdme. de Masseline, with radiant fascination. "We were computing the majority Government would have, and M. le Prince agreed with me that the Opposition would scarcely win a seat."

"Then you take interest in politics, mon Prince?" remarked M. Gribaud, looking with interest at the nobleman. "Why don't you come forward? There would be no difficulty in getting you elected."

"What could I represent, your Excellency?" asked the Prince, laughing. "A deputy should have land, and I have none. My fortune consists of dogs, horses, and *Crédit Parisien* shares; it would hardly do to come forward as the representative of these interests."

"Oh, the land idea is a fallacy!" returned M. Gribaud, bluntly; "it is just because you have no land you would do so well. We could present you anywhere; start you as a candidate untrammelled by landed or any other interests, and consequently offering every guarantee of independence."

"Yes, that is what my husband put in his last address, and he got thirty thousand votes," observed Mdme. de Masseline. "You have no idea, M. le Prince, how good-natured the peasantry are—and believing!" "We have a seat that would exactly do for you," pursued the Minister, as an idea appeared to strike him; and his tone curiously reminded the Prince of his horse-dealer saying, "A mare that will just carry your weight, mon Prince." "A mixed constituency, half borough, half country," continued M. Gribaud, vaunting his merchandise: "the present holder of the seat is old and used up: we have promised to put him into the Senate. Any how, he will not come forward again. The place is Hautbourg, and, as a sporting-man, the contest will amuse you. Your competitor will be young Gerold—you know the man; he calls himself Duke of Hautbourg now."

The Prince gave a slight start, and a flush rose to his face so rapidly that Mdme. de Masseline, ever observant, fastened her two sapphire eyes upon him like a pair of coruscating points of interrogation.

With a prompt determination that amazed but amused the lady, and gave pleasure to the statesman, the Prince answered,—"To tell your Excellency the truth, I had never dreamed of embracing politics; but the name of M. Gerold would almost induce me to accept your proposal. I do not think that gentleman worthy to sit in a National Assembly."

"No, he is not; and it pleases me to hear you say so," returned the Minister, with satisfaction. "He is a Radical, and makes speeches—we have tried every thing to convert him, but it was of no use."

The Prince did not think it necessary to undeceive M. Gribaud as to the motives for his stricture on Horace Gerold. The Minister was therefore left to suppose that the remark proceeded from an exuberance of Bonapartist zeal highly natural in a Prince of Arcola.

"Then we may rely on you," said he, with something like a gracious snort, "and we may order the prefect to start your candidature—enter you for the running, as they say at Chantilly?" and his hard mouth bordered on a grin.

"Of course your Excellency offers me an independent candidature?" asked the Prince seriously.

"Undoubtedly, my dear Prince," rejoined the Minister, who knew that there was not much to be apprehended from one bearing the name of Arcola, and a sportsman to boot. "You shall tell your electors what you please," and his contentment was such, that, rising to go, after a few minutes' more conversation, he said: "By the way, didn't you

say something about the *Crédit Parisien*? If you have shares in that concern let me advise you to sell out. I don't understand much about those affairs, but a shrewd financier, whose opinions I value, told me to-night that there were symptoms of a break-up. I give you the warning for what it's worth, and in confidence."

M. Gribaud guessed that a thing communicated in confidence within the hearing of *Mdme. de Masseline* was likely to be repeated confidentially to a good many persons before the week was out.

Soon afterwards the Prince offered his arm to *Mdme. de Masseline*, to conduct her to her carriage. On the staircase she said to him with gay malice, — "So it's the new Duke of Hautbourg who is your rival, mon Prince. Well, you can spare yourself the trouble of trying the revenge *à la Richelieu* on him, for I suspect somebody else has already done it for you."

"No, no, you mistake," answered the Prince, stopping her and looking rather shocked. "Horace Gerold's wife is the purest little thing in existence. Rather silly, I know, but nobody has ever breathed a word against her."

"Nor do I, my dear Prince," said she, drawing her cloak closer round her, with a pretty little shiver; "and, indeed, I was quite astounded when I heard it. Very much pained, too, I was, I assure you, for I love the little thing. I often go to see her, and she comes to see us. But why does she go about everywhere with a Captain of Carbineers? And why does that Captain sit behind her in her box at the opera and whisper compliments in her ear when her husband is not there? Those were questions I heard asked this very day, and I stood up for the poor child and said it wasn't true, and that I wouldn't have such things said about her."

"And you did quite right," rejoined the Prince, gravely, "for those facts you mention are the best proofs possible of her innocence. If she and the Captain were guilty they would act more cautiously, to avert suspicion."

"Well, I like to see men so chivalrous in defending us poor women," said *Mdme. Masseline*, smiling, and holding her little hand out of the brougham window for him to shake; "but we mustn't be so confident in every thing, my dear Prince. Mind, for instance, you don't forget to sell out your shares in the *Crédit Parisien*. That old Grand Vizier's warning made me feel quite cold, for my husband has shares, too, and we must get rid of them at once."

"I can't see that at all," muttered the Prince, in perplexity, as this charming apostle of morality was whirled away. "If the

company were all right we might sell out; — in fact, I, personally, was thinking of doing so. But now that I learn there's a screw loose, it would be as good as palming off a spavined horse on somebody, and letting him believe it was a sound one. That old Minister and this giddy woman can't have reflected on what they were saying."

And so this guileless nobleman sought his mansion, rather upset by M. Gribaud's warning. For the interpretation he chose to put upon it was, that he must not part with his shares on any account, lest by so doing he should pass them on to some unwary man, and cause his ruin. Which for the year of grace one thousand eighteen fifty-seven was as out-of-date a piece of reasoning as well might be.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### AFFAIRS OF INTEREST AND OF HONOR.

As for M. Macrobe, he went home from the Minister's reception in as fine a temper as he had ever experienced in his life. He did not attach much importance to M. Gribaud's threats concerning himself or the *Crédit Parisien*, but he was stung and exasperated by the opposition his projects respecting Horace had encountered. The hostility of the Government was going to plunge him into dilemmas. If Horace returned from Brussels re-puritanized by the week he had spent near his father's death-bed, and if he were still averse to installing himself at Clairefontaine, the realization of all his, M. Macrobe's, day-dreams would be indefinitely adjourned. Luckily for the financier's peace of mind and night's rest, his thoughts reverted to the newspaper telegram reporting the fracas between his son-in-law and Albi, and he blessed this Radical from the bottom of his heart.

The next morning M. Macrobe entered his daughter's boudoir early, for the purpose of instructing her as to what she should say to her husband, who was expected home during the day. *Angélique* was dressed in the deepest mourning. Mr. Girth had been called into requisition to furnish the most elegant and appropriate black costumes he could devise; and M. Macrobe had also put his entire household into sables, the footmen gliding about with black epaulets and aiglets, and Aunt Dorothee as much covered with lawn and crape as if she were inconsolable. M. Macrobe might, perhaps, have trusted his daughter to see to these not very arduous

details herself; but his distrust of her capacities seemed to increase instead of diminish as she grew older. His was the mind that bustled and superintended every thing; and he had not forgotten, as soon as Manuel Gerold was dead, to have all the Marquis's coronets on the carriages and hall chairs of the Hôtel Macrobe replaced by ducal ones, and to direct the servants to address the new duke on his return as "Monseigneur."

Angélique was alone. The evening before she had let fall a few words in her cousin's hearing about the difficulty of getting some worsted matched; and the Crimean Hero had started off, immediately he was up, to scour Paris with a ball of the rare wool in his pocket, and the determination to find one like it at any hazard in his gallant soul. Aunt Dorothée was in the seclusion of her own chamber darning pocket-handkerchiefs, or some work of darkness. She hid and barred herself in to perpetrate these crimes, for her brother allowed her enough pin-money to keep ten families in comfort, and having once discovered a basketful of stockings she had carefully mended, had pitched them unhesitatingly into the fire, and bought her six dozen pairs of new ones — an act of wastefulness that had kept her sleepless for a week.

"My child," began the financier, throwing himself on the sofa beside his daughter, and speaking much more brusquely than was his wont, "I hope you feel the importance of inducing your husband to renounce the Quixotism that is keeping him out of his estates. That was all very well for a time, whilst your father-in-law was alive; but the comedy would turn to a farce if it were played much longer."

"I do not think Horace intends it for a comedy," observed Angélique, meekly.

"No, but it is one nevertheless; and now is the time for you, if you are a woman of sense, to insist upon your husband doing what is proper and becoming. You should direct all your energies towards this object. What were you reading there?" and he took the book she was holding out of her hands. "*Vies des Grands Hommes par Plutarque, Edition expurgée.*" Fancy reading such trash as that! Who cares now about Epaminondas of Thebes, or Lycurgus of Lacedæmon? Why don't you take to *Bacon*, who painted our own times, and gave us a glimpse of the world we live in; or to *M. Gousset's* novels? He brings us one every six months, and I'm sure they're *very good reading*. Gousset is a witty man; he would enlighten you, teach you *what a grand thing should be*, and how she *should manage her husband.*"

"It was Horace who recommended me to read this book," said Angélique.

"Then do; but read the others as well. You're not a school-girl now, and your happiness is in your own hands. What I tell you is for your good. If a woman can't do what she likes with her husband, her life is a blank, and so is his. Men like being led, and they only like the women who lead them."

Angélique sighed.

"I always knew I was not the wife for Horace," she said, with sadness.

"Stuff!" answered the financier, bluntly. "But the way to secure a man's affection is not to be in perpetual adoration before him, as before a shrine. A woman must have spirit, and bring her husband to respect her. Look at that young Georgette Pochemolle, whom you took under your protection, and wanted me to abet in her husband hunt. She has spirit enough for two. She had set her cap at your husband, and would have probably married him if you hadn't, and depend upon it that, counter-girl as she is, she would have twirled him round her little finger, and been staring it as mistress of Clairefontaine long before this time."

"I know she is cleverer than I am," answered Angélique, wiping some tears, which had sprung to her eyes. "She would have made him happier than I do, and I believe he sees it now."

"You are a little goose," cried M. Macrobe, with anger. "You are in hysterics because your husband looks dull in your company, and because it turns out he spent an afternoon at Meudon last week. But what rivalry have you got to fear now? You are married; your husband can't divorce you; and as for Georgette, she is too shrewd a girl to become Horace's mistress. So all the cards are in your hands, and if your husband finds your company dull, it is merely because you sit and mope, reading 'Plutarch's Lives' instead of being up and stirring and remembering that you are Duchess of Hautbourg, and clearing your husband's mind of that mawkish, cheap-newspaper philanthropy which has got there like a cobweb into a knight's helmet. Lead him, push him to Clairefontaine, girl. You will make my fortune, and his, and he will thank you all his life for it."

This was the first time Angélique had seen her father so peremptory. His counsels were more often conveyed by hints than by direct injunctions; and the hints, though broad, were always given in cheerful, sanguine terms, with a kiss to seal them at the end. But now M. Macrobe gave no kiss; his words were incisive; the expression of his face was anxious; and Angélique,

as she looked at him through her tears, felt frightened.

She had not the remotest hope of bringing Horace to do any thing by her own powers of persuasion, and it was adding to her miseries to think that her father had any direct interest dependent upon her efforts. What could he mean by saying that she might make his fortune—he who was so rich already?

She was pondering over this in helpless silence, after making the faltering answer that she would do her best, when M. Macrobe was summoned away by a servant, who came to say that Monsieur Drydust and Monsieur Gousset had called to ask for news of the Duke of Hautbourg.

For news of the Duke! Why should they come for news of him?

Angélique had not seen the telegrams relative to the disturbance at Brussels, for, when Horace was not there to tell her what was in the paper, it was generally her cousin the Captain who read the chief items of interest to her, and as the Captain was this morning absent, she had been deprived of this recreation. But there was something in the word “news,” as pronounced by the footman, with an air of bewilderment, as if he only half understood what the two visitors meant, which startled her.

“What news?” she asked, forgetting, in her sudden stupor, that she had been crying, and that her eyes were red.

“The gentlemen said news from Brussels; Madame la Duchesse,” replied the servant, with hesitation. “They spoke of an accident.”

“Accident?” And Angélique rose, her face abruptly bleached of all its color.

“No, no,” ejaculated M. Macrobe, motioning to the man to withdraw. But Angélique was too deeply alarmed to be thus easily pacified, and though her father attempted to dissuade her, she followed him into the drawing-room.

Mr. Drydust and M. Gousset were both there, dressed in that complimentary mourning implied by gray gloves, and a hat-band two inches broad.

They pressed forward with looks of condolence befitting a visit to a house bereaved of an illustrious member; but M. Gousset did not open his mouth, for where Mr. Drydust was, a second spokesman was superfluous. To do the eminent Englishman justice, however, the sight of the young wife in her woeful crape dress, and with her terrified countenance, for a moment paralyzed even his eloquent tongue. But perceiving that there would, after all, be more cruelty in remaining silent than in speaking, he launched forth and described, with picturesque vividness, just as

he had done it already for the behoof of the readers of his penny paper, the scene at Brussels on the preceding day, the fineness of the weather, the speeches at the cemetery, the appearance of Albi, his insult of Horace, the tussle of the two men at the graveside (at which Angélique turned icy cold), and the final climax where both had been dragged out of the pit, bleeding, and half-stunned by the fall. Then had followed, it seems, an indescribable uproar—a tumult of shouts and excited recriminations. The great majority, who had not caught the sense of what Albi had said, looked upon Horace Gerold as the aggressor. They regarded his outbreak as a rancorous bit of spite that, considering the circumstances and the place, was ignoble and sacrilegious. He had been hissed as he left the burying-ground, and the event had thrown the whole French colony of Brussels into the wildest state of commotion. But Mr. Drydust knew no more than this, for his important duties did not allow of his absenting himself from Paris more than twenty-four hours, and he had left Brussels by the evening mail, just hearing, as he departed, that a meeting had been arranged between Horace Gerold and Albi for that night or the morrow morning.

Angélique sank on a sofa fainting, and some confusion followed with ringing of bells and racing about to fetch salts and glasses of water. Mr. Drydust, whilst experiencing an artist's pride in the effect his well-told narrative had produced, made himself useful in prescribing the way in which the salt-bottle should be held, the quantity of water that should be used to chafe the temples, and in recapitulating the symptoms of faintness he had observed after violent emotions in other people of his acquaintance. Then, when Angélique had been so far restored as to be able to say it was nothing, and that she should be well again immediately, he offered more valuable consolation by the remark that no news was good news, and that if no tidings had come it was certainly because no disaster had happened.

“You say the meeting was to take place last night or this morning?” said Angélique, trembling.

“I think last night, for it was moonlight, and they would want to get every thing over before the Belgian police had time to interfere,” answered Mr. Drydust; “but this is the more re-assuring as we must have heard by this time had there been any accident.”

“Duels between civilians, both ex-journalists, are not very serious,” put in M. Gousset, soothingly, with a smile. “I have been in many of them. We penmen bark

more than we bite," which was an observation he repented of a moment after, in recollecting the affair between Horace Gerold and the unlucky Government writer Paul de Cosaque.

M. Macrobe was more unsettled by the intelligence just brought than he cared to show; and asked in a low, quick voice, whether Mr. Drydust knew what weapons had been selected, and who were the seconds.

Mr. Drydust did not know about the weapons, but opined they must have been either foils or pistols. His Polish friend, Count Cutandslirski, had fought with a cavalry sabre, and he had been present at the duel of his other friend, El Conde y Colero, y Masticados, y Podagras, who had done battle with his grand-uncle's rapier; but such occurrences were exceptional. As for the seconds, Mr. Drydust had heard that all the Liberals, even one of Manuel Gerold's executors, Nestor Roche, had refused to act for Horace; but as Jean Kerjou was there, and had energetically taken part on Horace's side in the Cemetery riot, there was little doubt that he would be one of the seconds, and probably Emile Gerold would be the other. Mr. Drydust followed up with a story of his Bavarian friend, Baron Kortpfaster, who had been attended on the ground, in an emergency, by his undergardener and his head cook.

"At what time does the next train come in from Brussels?" inquired Angélique, resisting her father's advice that she should go and lie down a little, whilst a telegram was sent to Brussels with a request for an immediate answer, if Horace had not already left.

"I believe a special train was to leave two hours after midnight, on purpose to bring back the Parisians who had been to the funeral; and it ought to be due about this time," replied M. Gousset.

"Then let us go to the railway-station," pleaded Angélique to her father; "anything is better than this suspense."

M. Macrobe offered no opposition, and the carriage was ordered. But it was not required for this journey, for Angélique had scarcely returned to the drawing-room from putting on her bonnet, and Mr. Drydust was still expatiating to the financier on the possibilities and probabilities connected with affairs of honor, when the unconscious cause of all this anxiety, Horace himself, entered unannounced. He had let himself in with his latch-key, and was accompanied by Emile. His right arm was in a sling. Angélique started, gave a cry of joy, and — for the first time in her life — ran forward to throw herself in his arms. He kissed her, but coldly; and the poor child thought

he looked ten years older than when she had seen him last. The men clustered round to shake his hand, and question him about his wound, which he hastened to declare was a trifle.

"And Albi?" asked M. Macrobe, impatient to satisfy his curiosity.

Horace threw down his hat, and answered in a way that made his hearers' flesh creep. "After my first duel I promised my father, I would never again take human life. But I have shattered this man's wrist; and if ever again he edits a libel about me, it will not have been penned with his own hand!"

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

SUB ROSA.

THIS second duel was the one thing wanted to give the definite stamp to Horace's reputation. The Liberals were unanimous in holding that Albi had been as good as butchered by a bravo; and as Liberals, being the loudest talkers, generally end by imposing their opinions on the rest of the community, so it came to be generally admitted amongst the public, that the eldest son of Manuel Gerold was becoming a dangerous character. At the Café de Madrid opinions were unshakable on this point; so unshakable that Horace's friend Jean Kerjon exchanged warm words that were nearly begetting warm blows, in trying to din into an obtuse head that Horace had been first insulted, and that anybody else with an ounce of pluck would have acted as he had done. Of course, this convinced no one, nor could it be expected to do so, for the question as to who was right in the dispute and who wrong was quite beside the issues of the case. Albi had obtained twenty thousand opposition votes at the last election, and Manuel Gerold's son had suffered himself to be returned in the official interest — these were the true bases of the problem: and the conclusions to be drawn from them self-evident. In picking a quarrel with Albi and then maiming him, Horace Gerold had been actuated by the basest motives of personal vengeance, and all talk about provocation received was so much wantonness, a slander on the fair fame of an ill-used Liberal. By the end of a week, there was a great majority prepared to swear that Albi had never unsealed his lips by the grave-side at all; nay, that Horace had

first invited him to speak, and then clutched him by the throat as he was going to begin.

As for the government supporters on the Boulevards and in drawing-rooms, they waited before expressing an opinion to hear what the great M. Gribaud would say; but that statesman having remarked humorously to somebody: "*Bah! two Radicals fight, and one wings the other; c'est toujours une patte de moins,*" the fiat went forth that there was one Radical paw the less, and that was all. Some even pretended for a day or two not to remember which it was that had damaged the other, a good joke that took very well in ministerial ante-rooms, and Horace's only champions were his fellow deputies, who from *esprit de corps* were naturally pleased that a member of their House should have bruised one of the outer world; and the women, who, following the tender bent of their sex, thought the whole incident sensational and shocking, but admired the hero of it, deeming there was something mediæval and chivalrous in his readiness to go out and smash a fellow-being's limbs for a yea or a nay.

The event, however, served to draw down public attention on Horace in more ways than one. It was known that the Member for Paris inherited a dukedom by his father's death, and it was said that he also inherited a large fortune. During Manuel Gerold's lifetime the Clairefontaine mystery, as it was called, occupied few people, for the reason that society is not prone to credit particular individuals with virtues that it does not possess itself as a body. The construction put upon Manuel Gerold's self-banishment from Clairefontaine was simply that he preferred spending the revenues of that estate abroad; and when a few people hinted that the Republican exile laid out the whole of his income in charities, society smiled at such credulity — many answering that it was a notorious fact that Manuel Gerold owned a large mansion at Brussels, that he might be seen driving there any day in a barouche and four, that they had seen him there themselves — all of which things were religiously believed, for if it takes a long time to make us swallow truth, we gulp down slander without asking questions. Now, however, that Manuel Gerold was dead, and that people could give him his due without humiliating themselves, some began to admit that he had really died in a garret, and that it was a mistake about his barouche and four. But this only made them the more anxious to inquire what his son was going to do with the ancestral property; and they kept their eyes upon

Horace, who, living amongst them, could not hide his acts under a bushel as his father did.

"It is all on account of ghosts," said Mr. Drydust, confidentially, to an admiring circle of listeners. Manuel Gerold was superstitious. I never knew a Republican who wasn't — and he believed Clairefontaine was haunted. A very curious story, footsteps heard along the passages at night; a screech-owl making himself unpleasant at sunset, and so on. The Marquis of Stronachlachar, who has a castle in the Shetlands, told me a story like it. His great-grandfather comes and bays the moon seven days out of every month under the form of a black sheep-dog. The keepers have orders to let him alone. I shouldn't wonder if the screech-owl were a Gerold who had done something or other in days gone by. All the old families have an ancestor or two in trouble." And satisfied with having caused the hair of his gentle hearers to uncurl itself with horror, Mr. Drydust went home to write an extremely clever column of ghost legendry, which was devoured in Islington, Camberwell, and Upper Peckham; though the denizens of these Drydust-worshipping localities were informed that "my friend the new Duke of Hautbourg" was above being frightened away from his domain by disagreeable peculiarities just mentioned, and would probably hoist his pennon on Clairefontaine towers before the year was out. In fact," concluded Mr. Drydust, "I may inform you positively that he will do so. It is already announced that he will stand for the Hautbourg circumscription at the next elections; and I am told that the famous upholsterers, the Messrs. Palissandre, have been sent to the Castle to refurnish it from roof to basement. Perhaps some of my letters to you next autumn will be dated thence, as I count on going there for a few days' shooting."

It would have greatly relieved M. Macrobe to be as positive about all this as the English correspondent, for the financier was beginning to see that a great deal more hinged upon his son-in-law's resolutions than ever he had intended should be the case. The *Crédit Parisien* had been struck a blow in the dark — a vital blow that astounded M. Macrobe by its suddenness and alarming effects — and the question was now coming to this: — that unless Horace did what was required of him, and did it quickly, so as to place himself on a vantage-ground whence peace could be made on beneficial terms with M. Gribaud, the *Crédit Parisien* might crash down and involve its chairman in its utter ruin. Bitterly did the latter now curse himself for

the unguarded display of temper by which he had exposed himself to the animosity of the powerful Minister of an autocratic Sovereign. But even the shrewdest of us commit blunders, and M. Macrobe in that precipitate moment, when he defied M. Gribaud, really fancied he was the stronger. He had not given himself the time to reflect that all the influential men who supported the *Crédit Parisien* were the abject menials of their despotic chief, and that just as in their own interest they had founded the *Crédit Parisien*, so in their own interest they would desert it at the first frown of the man who held their political destinies in his hands. The financier saw this now, when it was too late. The credit of the Company was not yet shaken amongst the bulk of the shareholders; there had been no public panic, but all the principal holders of scrip were quietly withdrawing their stake in the game. It was like the departure of the rats before the crew of the sinking vessel have yet perceived the leak. Then, there was the more serious symptom of the breaking off of the bargain concerning that land which was to have been sold to Government for magazine building. The land had been bought at a high price under the certainty that the tax-payer would be made to purchase it for three times the sum given; but if this arrangement were cancelled, the Company must either re-sell the land—and there was little chance of their obtaining for it the sum they had paid—or build upon it at their own risks, that is, at obvious loss, for the quarter was not a likely one for building speculations. Anyhow, therefore, the operation would bear an ugly look in the next statement to the shareholders—those statements which the chairman was wont to make from an enthusiastic platform to an audience wild with confidence and delight! Yes, there was ruin lurking under those rocks ahead, towards which the gale he had invoked was driving the financier; though by ruin must not be understood in this case pecuniary destitution, for the chairman of the *Crédit Parisien* had taken good care that whatever befell the Company he himself should always remain well provided for. But the collapse of the *Crédit Parisien* would damage him morally, wreck all the ambitious schemes that were his passion; and under the circumstances his position would perhaps be worse than if he was beggared. For when a man of restless mood has more money than he wants, cares nothing for love, has no artistic tastes, and is so far shattered in reputation as to find the road to all the honors he covets hopelessly closed to him, what has he to live for?

Horace would have pitied his father-in-law if he could have divined the sickening anxiety that was gnawing at his heart. But the financier cloaked his feelings so that there was nothing of them visible in his face. Only he was more deferential with Horace than ever; agreed emphatically in all he said, and in the matter of the duel especially gave his approval without stint, in a hearty, admiring way, which was imitated in various keys by all the members of the household circle. Horace, however, abstained from all mention of the subject that was pre-occupying so many heads, both under the Macrobe roof and without it. He threw, indeed, a ray of hope across the financier's path by announcing *proprio motu*, on his return from Brussels, that he should accept the offer of the Hautbourg citizens; but allusions to Clairefontaine seemed tacitly adjourned until the day when the agent to the estate should pay the quarter's rents into the hands of Messrs. Lecoq, Roderheim and Macrobe, and when the latter would have to ask in his banking capacity what was to be done with the money. It was Manuel Gerold who had always disposed of the funds hitherto; for, notwithstanding the deed of gift, his sons had insisted upon charging him with this trust; but for the future Horace and Emile were the masters, and the payments would be made in their name. M. Macrobe looked forward to this day of rent much as a criminal does to his trial.

Meanwhile, he one evening received a call from M. Louchard. That functionary had not been sent for, but sneaked in at nightfall with a false beard on, and giving a card with a fictitious name on it to the servant. A few pencil hieroglyphics on the back of the card, however, revealed his identity to M. Macrobe, and he was at once admitted into the financier's study.

He never looked at peace with himself, did this official, and on the present occasion he was more than usually agitated, as though he had been followed all the way from the Rue de Jerusalem by one of his own men, and expected to be apprehended by the neck. On the other hand, the troubled glance he cast at M. Macrobe, and the dishevelled appearance of his spurious black beard might have given one to suppose that he had private orders to arrest the financier and did not like the job.

"M. Macrobe," he began, removing the spectacles that encumbered his eyesight, and staring in alarm at the financier, "you have been quarrelling with M. Gribaud?"

"Yes. How do you know it, and what are your instructions with regard to me?" answered M. Macrobe calmly.

"Not many instructions about you, sir," rejoined the Director of Police, making as if he would remove his beard also, but, on second thoughts, allowing it to remain, as not easy to re-fix. "Not many instructions about you, but we are to send down five men to Hautbourg to sap your son-in-law's candidature."

"That is, to tell lies about him?"

"Well, M. Macrobe, you know how we generally work in such cases. We must say as much good as possible about the official candidate, and spread all the rumors we can about his opponent."

"What kind of rumors, for instance?"

"It all depends on the locality, on the character of the candidate, and on that of the electors," said M. Louchard piteously. "What answers in one case will not always do in the other. This time we have to whisper that your son-in-law is stingy, that he is a Radical who hoards up all his money, and will never go to live at Clairefontaine because of the expense it would entail. Also, that he doesn't pay his bills, and one of our agents is to pretend to be a small tradesman who has had a debt owing to him for years. This will disgust the men. Then, to put the women against him, we have got to report that—I beg your pardon, sir—that he drinks, and beats his young wife; that he seduced a girl in Paris, and deserted her with her child, refusing to give her a centime; and that he killed two poor men in duels, leaving their wives with children to bring up and no money to do it with. Then we should urge that if the official candidate were elected, he would buy Clairefontaine of the new duke, and hold high state there, which, being a rich man, he can afford to do."

M. Macrobe quietly went to his bureau, unlocked a pigeon-hole, and fingered some bank-notes.

"What is the pay of the five men who are to do this work?"

"Bribery is not possible here," answered M. Louchard, with a shake of the head. "Besides, it would be of no use, for the mayors of all the *communes*, the priests, the justices of the peace, the schoolmasters, will every one of them be against Monsieur le Duc. An election in the country is not the same thing as one in Paris. If I were M. le Duc I would retire. The defeat will be certain."

"Here are ten thousand francs," remarked M. Macrobe, paying no heed to what the other was saying. "If I thought they would be of no use I shouldn't give them you. The five men must be bought, and, instead of running down the Duke of Hautbourg, they must malign his adver-

sary. Now tell me about the prefect. What sort of a man is he?"

"H'm, one of the usual sort," replied M. Louchard, not resisting above a quarter of a minute to the temptation of the notes. "He has nothing but his pay, thinks a good deal of himself, and is an ass. He used to be a journalist."

"I fancy I remember the man. Used to be in the Republican press, then became one of Guizot's semi-officials; after '51 found himself a Bonapartist."

"Those men are expensive to bribe when they get to be prefects," observed M. Louchard, despondingly. "His salary is thirty thousand francs, and M. Gribaud's rule is inflexible. A prefect who lets a member of the Opposition through loses his place."

"Well, listen, Louchard," said the financier, sinking his tone and speaking quickly. "Gribaud trusts you, and you have power. I have put you in the way of a fair number of good things, since we first became acquainted, but all that is nothing to what you will reap if you serve me in this. I *must* win this election;—do you understand, I *must*? Now manage in your own way. Give the prefect his price, and tell him we'll see he doesn't lose his place. Buy the sub-prefect of the arrondissement, and as many priests and schoolmasters as you may deem it worth while. I don't care much about the mayors, for country mayors are dolts, and obey either the vicar or the school-teacher, whichever happens to have the most intriguing head-piece. But cajole the women. Women are the hinges of the political door, it won't swing to order without their help. As to money, I give you *carte blanche*: and, if we win, your own fee, mind, is five thousand napoleons."

M. Louchard was unnerved.

"If we fail it shall not be for want of efforts," stuttered he, drawing out the pocket-handkerchief, which was the signal he hoisted in cases of mastering emotion.

"Yes, but we musn't fail. You must go to work as I've seen the Government do in past elections. There's no Opposition paper in Hautbourg, of course. You must supply the deficiency with lampoons against the other man. Circulate them widely, silyly; have them pasted everywhere in the villages, scattered broadcast in the fields—good, unscrupulous, plain-spoken lampoons, such as the peasants will understand and commit to memory. Those were capital lampoons your office circulated against that Orleanist count who contested the Charente last year."

"Ay, they were, and they almost drove the man mad," exclaimed M. Louchard, brightening at the recollection. "It's a



very clever fellow who writes them. He is one of our *jays*."

"One of your — ?"

"I beg your pardon;" — and M. Louchard grinned slightly — "*jay* is the name we give to the writers of the Opposition press who are in our pay, and whose business it is to sow dissensions in the other camp by accusing the foremost men in the party of being backsliders. The trade requires talent. One of the *jays* shall do us these lampoons. The work will be the easier here, as the Duke's opponent is a stranger to Hautbourg, and there will be no prejudices in his favor to overcome."

"Who is he?" asked M. Macrobe, without interest, for official candidates were generally the personages of least importance in the contests to which they lent their names.

"Why, it's the Prince of Arcola. Has it not appeared in the papers yet?"

The financier dropped a packet of letters he was holding.

"The Prince of Arcola!" he echoed, pensively. "What can this mean? Why, he is one of the Duke's intimate friends."

"He may have been, M. Macrobe; but the friendship has cooled now," answered the police director glumly. "I heard from M. Gribaud's own lips that the Prince owed a grudge to the Duke of Hautbourg and would fight him hotly; and a lady who notes for our office — I may as well give you the name: it's Mdme. de Masseline — told me that the grudge is one with a woman at the bottom of it. Stay, I have it on paper" — M. Louchard drew out a dingy pocket-book and read: "*When Deputy Horace Gerold lived Rue Ste. Geneviève, seduced daughter of his landlord, draper Pochemolle. Name of girl Georgette. N. S.;*" this means that there was no scandal, that the neighbors didn't get wind of it. "*P. of A. took a fancy to Georg. I. I.:*" that is, in all innocence. "*Proposed to her and was refused. Bec. mist. 1st lov.:*" because she is still the mistress of her first lover. "*K. Meudon, styl. dec. 2 par. 1 bro. = resp.:*" he keeps her at Meudon, in a becoming style, and she has her parents and her brother living under the same roof with her for respectability's sake."

M. Louchard closed his pocket-book, and restored it to its lair, without appearing to reflect that there was any thing in his communication of a nature to jar upon a father's ears. "This accounts for the Prince of Arcola's animosity," he added, sapiently. "He is a very proud nobleman, and doesn't like to be crossed."

M. Macrobe had stood staring whilst M. Louchard read his memorandum. He was inclined to credit every word of it; but the

circumstances unfolded rather astonished than shocked him, for he was too much of a Frenchman and too little of a moralist to be over-sandalized at his son-in-law's keeping a mistress. What he ruminated was how the intelligence could be made to serve his own particular ends; and this pre-occupation took shape in his next words.

"Do you know whether the Duke goes often to Meudon?"

"I do not, M. Macrobe," answered M. Louchard, "but we could easily find out."

"Yes, I wish you would. Set a man to watch when he visits there, and drop me a line. As for the election, all that I have said before holds good. Commence operations at once, and ply your money cleverly."

M. Macrobe had a second recourse to the pigeon-hole, and M. Louchard, for the second time, drew out his handkerchief.

"There's not a person in the world I would do this for but you," said he, evidently anxious to compound a little with his own conscience. "You act very generously, M. Macrobe, and the pay at the Rue de Jerusalem is not good; indeed, I should have retired ere this, but for expecting the cross of honor and a small pension at the end of my twenty years' service. I risk both those, and my liberty as well, by doing this."

"Nothing venture, nothing have, Louchard; but you will lose nothing if you bestir yourself at your best."

"I will forward you daily reports of the progress we make," said the police-director; and with a new attempt at self-compounding, he added: "After all, I shall be acting according to my own convictions in helping the Duke of Hautbourg. I am of his opinion in politics. I don't like M. Gribaud."

"You are a Liberal, then, Louchard?"

"Yes, and have been from father to son," replied the other, innocently; "and I admire M. de Hautbourg for his spirits. I was at Brussels the other day in a professional capacity, and saw the fight in the cemetery. It was like a bull-dog shaking a pole-cat. M. de Hautbourg was very near shaking me once in that way; but I have forgiven that little unpleasantness: we were both doing our duty on that occasion."

There was a few more minutes' business conversation, after which M. Louchard made his bow. But on the point of regaining the door he turned round abruptly and ejaculated, "By the by, I was very nearly forgetting another matter — the Crédit Parisien."

"What about the Crédit Parisien?" returned M. Macrobe, sharply.

"Well, nothing that concerns me, sir; for when you were obliging enough to let me have those shares, I sold out six months after, as you directed me, and made a good deal by your advice. But I rather fancy M. Gribaud has quarrelled with the *Crédit Parisien* as well as with you; and I thought you might like being warned."

"What makes you think this?"

"Oh, there are signs by which to detect it!" and M. Louchard's false beard smiled. "At the central telegraph station the C. P. telegrams had precedence of all except those of the Government; now, they are made to take their chance with the ruck. Then we have our secret inspector of the Bourse, who is a barometer in financial matters. Not so long ago he scowled at one of his subs for saying that the *Crédit Parisien* was like an over-blown balloon, and would burst some morning; yesterday that same sub remarked that the *Crédit Parisien* was certainly the best thing in the money market, and the barometer scowled again."

"The *Crédit Parisien* is a granite rock," said M. Macrobe, dismissing his interlocutor, "and next time you have money to spare buy shares in it and keep them. Good evening, Louchard. Don't forget about setting one of your men to watch when my son-in-law goes to Meudon."

The door closed behind M. Louchard, and the financier was left to his reflections. "My son-in-law is a better comedian than I imagined," he muttered. "Fancy his being able to keep a mistress within a year of his marriage, and whilst living under my roof, without my suspecting it! Well, there's comfort to be drawn from the fact in one way. If he makes so light of altar vows, he's not likely to let himself be hampered long by his late father's crotchets."

But M. Macrobe wished to make certain that there was no mistake in this, so he went and found Horace, and said to him at once, without preliminaries, "I have just been told the name of your opponent: it's the Prince of Arcola. Have you quarrelled with him? They say he is very bitter against you."

Horace colored, and the reply he made was stammered. The fact is, he felt surprised; but M. Macrobe not unnaturally set it down to guilt. "Louchard was right," said the financier to himself, whilst a gleam of genuine satisfaction lit up his face. "Well now, my son-in-law, this is lucky, for we can oblige you to do what we desire. A man who wants to seem pure in public life must begin by being so in private. You shall take us all to Clairefontaine before long, or else you will have to reckon with me as your wife's father."

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### INTER POCULA.

UNCONSCIOUS of his father-in-law's suspicions, unconscious of his wife's drift in recurring daily, with timid persistence, to the subject of Clairefontaine, unmindful of that pensive melancholy which was becoming her habitual mood, and which would have excited the anxiety of a more vigilant husband, Horace was wrapt in a state of mind that was none of the brightest. He was conscious of not being happy, of being on the brink of decisive events, and he asked himself with uncertainty in his heart what he should do next. A problem which only the weak pore over, for the strong solve it at once by instinctive action.

There were few places more propitious for strolling reveries than the equestrian alleys of the Bois de Boulogne, at that period of the Second Empire when artistic designs and irresponsible control of the municipal budget had made of that suburban wood the modern garden of Eden. Horace often rode there of an early morning, whilst the fawns and dryads that haunt the sylvan scene in the later day—*vulgo* the demi-monde and its worshippers—were yet a-sleeping. It was pleasant to amble up the shady avenue of the Triumphal Arch whilst M. Haussmann's watermen were laying the dust with their flexible tubes, whilst the milk-carts rattled into Paris with their hosts of tin cans, whilst the air was fresh, and the singing of the birds as yet undrowned by the voices of men. In the wood itself the lilacs put forth their first tender shoots, the drooping laburnums gave early promise of golden blossoms, the spreading chestnuts ahead of their brother trees dotted the spongy sand of the rows with white flowerlets like snow-flakes. Horace had all the alleys to himself. Not a human being visible, save the wood-keepers, who, however, are not human, belonging to the *genus* functionary; or here and there a matutinal British colonist galloping away his spleen, according to French notions, or simply giving himself an appetite for breakfast, if we accepted his own view of the case.

The environs of Paris on the outskirts of the Bois de Boulogne are so picturesque and varied, that Horace might have struck out a ride of new interest for himself every morning; and, as a matter of fact, he did spur forward now in one direction, now in another. But no matter what the line might be that he took up on starting, the end of his ride always brought him back to the same point, and that point was Meudon.

He would ride past the house where Georgette lived, or rein up his horse under a clump of trees, and survey it from a distance. He loved Georgette; there was no rooting up that passion from his heart; it had sprung like a weed, and like a weed it grew, steadily and irrepressibly. At least, irrepressibly in this sense, that he made no attempt to check it. He let it quietly intertwine itself with all his thoughts, and if, perchance, remorseful promptings crept up as thorns beside the weed, and threatened to choke it, it was the thorns and not the weed which he pulled up and cast aside. It seems a dismal thing that bad passions should thrive so luxuriantly when good ones are often so slow to take germ; but so it is all the world over; and in loving a woman of whom he had no business to think — between whom and him stood the most sacred barrier that laws and custom could interpose — Horace was only pointing the old but eternally true story of the forbidden fruit.

It would have been fair to suppose that the contempt with which Georgette had treated him in that short, violent scene, which formed the subject of his bitter musings at Brussels, would have helped to extinguish his senseless passion. But when did vitriol ever quench fire? Smarting under the lash of the girl's reproaches, stung to fury by the falseness of her accusation, he had in a first paroxysm repaid anger with anger, invective with invective; but once this outbreak over, he had felt more drawn than ever towards the woman who spurned him. Georgette seemed to rise above him in her indignation, and to be only the more fascinating. Horace was too morally weak himself to admire weakness in woman. Nevertheless he prowled about her abode without daring to go in. He would have had a pretext for a visit, for the draper and his son had made a special journey to Brussels to attend Manuel Gerold's funeral, and courtesy required that he should thank them. But he left cards. When the servant opened the door, and he was about to dismount, he abruptly changed his mind, and gave himself as an excuse that it was too early for a call, it being ten o'clock. Perhaps what he trusted to most was a chance encounter. He might meet her one day going to visit a neighbor or to mass. Then he would speak to her, apologize for his insults; exculpate himself from the charges she had brought against him; say all that men do say who wish to persuade a woman that they love her. And Horace had a presentiment, that if he could obtain a meeting he should be listened to; at least in silence, for he *knew* this much of human nature — that

where indignation is very strong in woman, love is not quite dead; there is a spark still smouldering, which can, with a little effort, be revived into flame. So to increase the probabilities of his chance rencontre, Horace insensibly lingered a little later every morning about Meudon, and sometimes would find himself there long after the hour at which he usually breakfasted. This occurred a few mornings after he had heard from M. Macrobe that the Prince of Arcola had become his foe. Looking at the clock of the Meudon mairie as he rode down the trim main street of that toy-village, he saw it was nearing eleven. Upon which he did as was his wont when he had tarried too long — put up at the chief restaurant of Meudon, to which a small hotel and stabling were attached, committed his hack to an ostler, and ordered breakfast for himself.

It was a charmingly fresh restaurant, with its pink and white awning outside, shading a row of white marble tables, where easy Meudonites were sipping coffee, biters, and reading those spicy collections of false news, mad leaders and improper anecdotes called French papers. Within, more Meudonites were discussing *déjeûners à la fourchette* at three francs a head, wine included, and chatting in a neighborly way to one another from their respective tables, for all seemed to know each other in the little place, and it was the running fire of familiar inquiries, such as "How are your crocuses coming up this year, M. Marchagy?" "Captain, I noticed your syringas over the hedge coming along. How do you manage to makè 'em bud so early?" &c., &c. And presiding over this scene of comfortable retired tradesmen and half-pay officers, a smart *dame du comptoir* in flounces, jewelry, and a slight suspicion of rouge, who favored Horace with a gracious bow as he entered, and nodded to a waiter to hasten and dance attendance on him.

Horace liked this rural restaurant, because he was not known there, which was more than he could have said in any public place within Paris, where he could scarcely have presented himself since his last duel without being mobbed as a curiosity. He gave his hat and riding-whip to the waiter, who, in a trice, had set a table for him, planted a swimming butter-boat and pink radishes on it, and thrust the *menu* into his hands. A French waiter always does this with a glib accompaniment of the names of dishes ready, or likely to be so, within twenty minutes; and thus did this waiter, rattling out his items with a jerky action of the head and many interrogatory pauses. But Horace was not fated to breakfast alone, for at this moment a lanky figure emerged from a corner somewhere, stalked giggling

across the room, and put out a moist hand to be squeezed.

It was M. Alcibiade Pochemolle.

Now, if there was a person in the world who evoked conflicting emotions in Horace's breast, it was this M. Alcibiade. When Horace thought of Georgette, it was to ask himself whether he would not have done better to marry her; but when his eyes fell upon M. Alcibiade, the reflection that arose was that, if he had married Georgette, this well-meaning but utterly insupportable youth would have been his brother. However, as the paw was there, no course lay open but to squeeze it, and the ceremony was performed with a tolerably successful pretence at cordiality. For this once — and, probably, by accident — M. Alcibiade looked almost a gentleman, being devoid of the scarlet and green scarfs, and the excessive hair-oil which were his customary adornments. It transpired later that he had been taking a bath in the river, and considered himself only half-dressed.

"Been up to the house, M. Horace — a — Monsieur le Duc?" he giggled, spasmodically. "No? Then come to have a chop here? That's what I was just going to order myself."

This was apparently designed for a timid hint, and Horace foreseeing that if not invited M. Alcibiade might possibly invite himself, suggested they could both take their chops together. At the same time, not desirous of being seen publicly banqueting with M. Alcibiade, he remarked on the advantages of a private room, and the waiter was bidden to show them to such a one.

"Yes, a private room's more stylish," approved M. Alcibiade, raising himself with some little awe on his boot-tips, as if suddenly mistrustful whether the number of his inches qualified him for lunching in private. "But stay, though; I mustn't forget, I expect a friend here by and by. You won't mind his being sent up to our private room, Monsieur le Duc?"

And M. Alcibiade articulated the words, "Monsieur le Duc," in an audibly stammered tone, with the intention of impressing them upon the waiter, who pricked up his ears.

But the waiter and the rest of the company were much more impressed upon when M. Alcibiade pursued, with the nervous boldness of one who makes a successful maiden-speech in public, "I say, waiter, a gentleman will be asking for me here, presently. His name's M. de Filoselle. When he comes, you'll show him up to the private room where I and my friend the Duke of Hautbourg will be eating. Mind you don't make a mistake."

Had the Czar of all the Muscovies or the

Schah of all the Persias been announced, their names could not have produced a more galvanic effect. Every fork stopped midway to every mouth; every bottle paused at half-cock in replenishing every glass; the smart lady at the counter made a sudden blot with the pen wherewith she was adding up a bill; and Horace passed through the public room, up to the staircase leading to the *Cabinets Particuliers*, between two rows of fixed eyeballs, like a cutter running the blockade of a double row of forts.

When he had vanished there was a buzz, as of many startled wasps.

"That's the member for Paris."

"Horace Gerold, the new Duke of Hautbourg, who winged the Revolutionist the other day."

"He doesn't look a very pleasant customer, with those black clothes of his, and that frowning face," remarked an ex-blanket-vendor, rather scared.

"He is very handsome," put in the smart lady of the counter, scratching out her blot. "I guessed he must be somebody when he first came here."

"Don't say but he hasn't good looks; but what a proud face to him — just as if he was ready to stick one through for a nothing," commented another dealer, also rather scared, and late in the pickle way.

"I've seen him riding about here pretty often lately, — fine nag," observed a retired captain, cross of the Legion of Honor, hair clipped into bristles, purple physiognomy.

"So have I," assented he of the ex-pickles.

"Did you say he rode about here every day?" quickly inquired a sociable stranger, who had entered the restaurant very soon after Horace, and seemed smilingly anxious to strike up a conversation.

"I didn't say every day, but I might have done it," returned the captain, with a praiseworthy regard for exactness. "The fact is, the Duke *has* been here every day this past fortnight or more, I do believe."

"Ah, dear me!" said the sociable stranger, and he began assaulting a *bifieck* with great vigor. Nobody knew the affable gentleman, but it was noticed by and by that he somehow persisted in lingering over his finished breakfast until the Duke of Hautbourg had gone. Then he jumped up, went out and looked very much as if he were following the young nobleman.

Meanwhile, M. Alcibiade, always giggling and moist, was doing the best honor in his power to the breakfast which Horace had ordered, and ingurgitating Rhine wine with the admirable confidence of those who are unused to that class of beverage. He drank it in tumblers: "For," said he practically, "those 'ere long-stemmed glasses

do slip about so in your fingers:" which was true enough, for one of the long-stemmed glasses had slipped about so from his fingers on to the floor.

"So you expect Monsieur Filoselle?" remarked Horace, as M. Alcibiade poured down his fourth tumbler.

"Yes, M. Horace—I mean, M. le Duc. This 'ere fizzing hock's good stuff, I've never tasted any of it before," and he smacked his lips.

"Pray let me fill your glass."

"Don't mind if I do, M. Horace—I beg pardon. I wish I could get into the way of calling you M. le Duc."

"Call me M. Horace. I prefer it."

"Oh, no! that would never do; a duke's a duke,—hang it!—and it's not every day I get the treat of breakfasting with one, or off such a feed as this. What did you say this here dish was,—salmis of pheasant? Devilish good! But, as you was asking, M. le Duc, I expect Filoselle. And I'll tell you,—I don't mind telling you, for you'll keep a secret—me and him is mounting a plot."

"A plot?"

"Ay" (down went tumbler number five); "you know Filoselle was spoony off my sister. I don't mind Filoselle; he's not of our rank, for we're *rentiers*, and he's obliged to work for his bread: but he's a good fellar. When we used to be at the shop, and I was in my school-days, he used to tip me a *nap*. now and then when I was hard up. I don't want any of 'em now; I've got plenty of cash" (M. Alcibiade slapped the twin pockets of his trousers, and some loose silver and copper therein lifted up their jingling voices in testimony). "But all the same, I remember what Filoselle did for me, and one good turn deserves another. Well, Filoselle thinks he's been treated shabbily because he was cut out by the Prince of Arcola. You've heard about the Prince proposing to Georgette. No? *Tiens c'est drôle*, I thought the Prince might have told you, per'aps, being your friend. Well, he did; he proposed; came down in the nobbiest trap you ever saw, in black togs, with his decorations, and pink stockings to his footman's legs, quite the swell. And as I said to Filoselle, 'You couldn't expect, old chap, we should think about you when we had a chance of making Georgette a Princess. Bis'ness is bis'ness, hang it. However, Georgette refused the Prince—slap-up she did—told him she wouldn't have him.'"

M. Alcibiade heaved a chagrined sigh that degenerated into a hiccough. Horace was paying the keenest attention.

"Yes, refused him," continued M. Alcibiade, lugubriously. "It was a shocking

sell for us all. Mother she became yaller as a quince; father took it better—said something about its serving us right; but I didn't like it better than mother, for I'd already cut off and told some chaps about it's being cock sure; and when they see me now some of 'em says, 'Ow about the Prince?' which, you know, isn't pleasant for a fellar."

M. Alcibiade made an abrupt effort to reach the hock bottle, but only succeeded in knocking over the salt-cellar.

"Allow me," said Horace, replenishing his guest's glass, though not without some apprehension, for the sparkling iced liquid was beginning to produce its effect on M. Alcibiade's manner, but especially on his countenance.

"How hot it is!" exclaimed the latter, when his sixth tumbler had gone at one gulp the way of the fifth; and he drew out his handkerchief to fan himself. As he did so a key fell out of his pocket on to the carpet.

Horace picked it up and restored it to him.

"This is yours, I think?"

"Oh, thank you, M. le Duc!—(hiccough)—I mushn' lose that. Admits into our house and garden. It's my latch-key, that I let myself in with when I go to Paris on a spree, and don't return—(hiccough, grin and wink)—t—t—till morning."

The impressed waiter here entered after the cannot-ball manner of his kind, cleared away the salmi and broken salt-cellar, introduced *omelette soufflée*, Roquefort cheese and pulled bread, and vanished with an order for coffee, *chartreuse*, and cigars. Whilst he was in the room M. Alcibiade endeavored to maintain a dignified attitude, which resulted in his almost rolling off his chair and having to be propped up. When the waiter was gone, he fell to on the omelette and remarked perplexedly on the giddy properties of fresh air, which had almost knocked him off his chair just now. He rallied at the coffee, perhaps under the influence of a giant glass of seltzer-water, which Horace counselled him to take; and having inserted a flat *panatella* screw-wise into the corner of his mouth, and begun to suck it as if it were a stick of liquorice, showed himself disposed for more talk.

"You were telling me about the interesting plot between yourself and M. Filoselle," said Horace, handing him a lighted match for his cigar.

"Ha! I've got to go on with that—let's see where I was—I was saying how that silly girl had refused the Prince—yes, that's it—and how the chaps was chaffing me, which wasn't pleasant," resumed M. Alcibiade, with intermingled hiccoughing

and puffing. "Well, we was down in the mouth for a good ten days afterwards, asking ourselves what she should be so stoopid for, and hoping she would think better of it, and send back for the Prince, but she didn't, but only moped and cried by herself. And then came your father's funeral, M. le Duc, to which me and the guv'nor both went, because M. Gerold (hiccough) once saved the guv'nor's life, and gratitude, as the guv'nor says, ought to come as regular after a good deed, as profits after a good investment. We was at the cemetery, M. le Duc, me and the guv'nor (hiccough), and we was quite close when you grabbed hold of that radical cove by the throstle and tórt him to behave himself by rolling him into the pit and yourself on to the top of him. And we waited in Brussels till next day to hear what would come of it, and me and the guv'nor was precious glad when we heard that you'd spoilt his fin for him so that he wouldn't jaw away out of his turn again." (Two consecutive hiccoughs. M. Alcibiade struck a match to relight his *panatella*, which had gone out.)

"M. Filoselle was at the funeral too. Is that what you were going to say?" interrupted Horace, frowning slightly, and with some impatience.

"Ha! I was coming to that. Yes, M. le Duc, that's just it. We met Filoselle there, too, glum and genteel in his black clothes, but he made believe to be short-sighted and stared the other way when we passed (hiccough), and I don't believe he'd have spoken to us at all, if the guv'nor hadn't waited for him afterwards, and held out his hand and asked him to make it up; for the guv'nor always stuck by Filoselle. Filoselle hesitated a bit, but then gave in and asked how Georgette was, in a stiff-starched voice like. But when he heard how Georgette had turned the Prince off — for the guv'nor spouted it all out — (hiccough), he brightened up — my eye how he did brighten up, and you couldn't have seen him happier if he'd become emperor. 'Ah, my adored Georgette!' shouted he, right out aloud; 'I knew you'd remain faithful to your 'Ector;' then he almost blubbed, and so did the guv'nor (hiccough), saying nothing ever came of turning off one man to try and get a better one; and as I knew it was no good hoping to make Georgette understand reason, now, I said the same thing, and we all went and dined together, Filoselle standing treat, for he said he'd been earning cash by the heaps lately. And when the sweets was on the table — *compote d'ananas* and such like — the guv'nor (hiccough) drank Filoselle's health, and said that all might come right yet, and then us three — me, the guv'nor and him — mounted that plot

of ours, which is to help Filoselle to get married, as if nothing had happened."

"How so?" Horace's eyes peered anxiously into the besotted physiognomy opposite him.

"Oh, it's like this, (puff-hiccough-puff): Georgette only told mother, but not father, why she had refused the Prince, but father knows it was because she loved somebody else; and that somebody else can only be Filoselle, as he says, and Filoselle is of the same opinion. But mother wouldn't hear talk of Filoselle yet, for she's too sore about the Prince, and maybe she hopes he'll still come back and get Georgette to accept him — which 'ud be stunning, but too good to be true. So I come here twice a week to meet Filoselle, and take letters from him to Georgette and bring back the answers. This here cigar of mine won't keep alight, (hiccough) — this is the second time I've come. I took a letter last time, and I bring back the answer to-day. That is, I don't bring one, for there wasn't any."

"There was no answer?"

"No," M. Alcibiade grinned, hiccoughed, and put on an arch leer. "Georgette seemed surprised when she got the letter, but that of course was all gammon, such as girls love to play. She won't give me an answer just yet, but by and by she will; and meantime I'll warrant she'll get talking mother round on the sly, as Filoselle advises her to do in the letter. My eye, Filoselle does love her, and if you want to see a chap spoony, look at him — he says that the girl who'll turn off a Prince to keep faithful to the man she likes, deserves to be fed on gold out of a diamond spoon, that's what Filoselle says."

Horace swallowed his glass of chartreuse in silence and then said, looking hard at M. Alcibiade: "Did Mademoiselle Georgette refuse the Prince beyond recall?"

"Oh, yes! (hiccough), cooked his goose completely. Manette, our maid, said a pin's head might have knocked him down when he went out. This here second cigar won't (p-p-puff) draw better than the first — M. le Duc, when a gal is spoony off one chap, it seems it ain't like with us men; she can't abide the sight of the others. I'm not like that — I love all the gals. Still, I bet if Filoselle had had a sister that had been making love to me, and the Prince of Arcola had had another sister that had been doing the same, I should have sent Filoselle's sister to the rightabout in very quick time and not been such a muff as Georgette."

Horace looked at his watch. There was some agitation in his manner.

"I see it is nearly one, M. Pochemolle. You will excuse my ringing for the waiter."

"I wonder at Filoselle not coming yet," hiccoughed M. Alcibiade, "but, by gad, now I think of it, per'aps he may be in the billiard-room all this while, and so missed the waiter." He staggered to his legs. "I say, though, M. le Duc," (this as the bill was being settled), "it's awfully kind of your stumpin' up for me in this way, hanged if it isn't. I owe you a feed, mind, and we'll have some more of that fizzing hock. I sha'n't forget it in a hurry, that I won't." He clutched at his hat on the peg, but losing his balance at that critical moment, and being obliged to hold on by his head covering, was within an ace of tearing it in two. "Will you come down and shake hands with Filoselle, M. le Duc?" was his next remark. He was grasping the back of the chair to steady himself, and speaking with a meritoriously determined attempt at gravity.

"I am afraid I must forego that pleasure: I must be at the Corps Législatif at two. Pray remember me to him."

Horace was obliged to submit, not to the handshaking, but to the affectionate embrace of M. Alcibiade, whose sole regret was that this brotherly ceremony was not witnessed by the whole population of Meudon assembled. The embrace of a Duke had, however, this satisfactory effect, that it for a moment sobered him and enabled him to totter down stairs, holding his head erect, without breaking his neck, thanks partly to the kindly assistance of the waiter, the collar of whose coat he clutched. Horace, having to wait till his horse was round, did not immediately follow him. He paced the small room with an excited step but a beaming eye.

"Then she loves me still as much as ever," were the words he would have doubtless uttered had he spoke his thoughts aloud. "She loves me above every thing on earth since she can make such a sacrifice as this for me. And I who accused her of having jilted that wretched traveller so as to win the Prince! I who cast in her teeth that her refusal of the Prince was only a comedy she was playing to some scheming end or other! How see her now to ask her, pardon, to make my peace with her and vow that nothing shall ever come between us again. I must see her alone, but how?"

His foot struck against something on the ground. He looked down. There was the key which M. Alcibiade ought to have put back into his pocket, but which he had put on to the carpet instead, his faculties being absorbed in hock. The key, M. Alcibiade had mentioned, admitted to the garden as well as to the house. Horace had only to go down stairs to restore it to the owner.

He hesitated half a moment, and then kept it.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### M. GRIBAUD MAKES A SPEECH.

ON leaving Meudon, he rode straight into Paris. Like most ambitious men, whose range of mind is not extensive, Horace Gerold could devote himself but to one thing at a time; but to that thing, whatever it was, he gave himself up wholly. When he was pursuing love affairs the entire world might have been dead for all the thoughts he bestowed upon it; all his own interests even, except the particular one in hand, were for the time being banished from his reflections. On the other hand, when he was engaged in politics, politics were the only aims he had present before him. They engrossed him as if he loved them, which he did not; or as if he understood them, which he did still less. Thus it was that twenty minutes after leaving Meudon, where he had resolved that before long he would see Georgette, and see her alone, he was riding down the Champs Elysées in a brown study, his mind already roaming on to scenes where M. Gribaud, official candidatures, and parliamentary speeches, played the leading parts, and whence love consequently was excluded. At home he found Angélique not anxious about his absence during the whole morning, as he had rather feared she would be. His morning rides were become so regular; and so regularly did they lengthen every day, that she was resigned to them, never asked where he had been, never showed that she suspected it; but only inquired in her sweet way whether he had had a good ride, and on occasions like the present, when he returned extra-late, whether he had lunched.

Answering both questions in the affirmative this time, he kissed his young wife rather more tenderly than usual. This is a way with husbands who have faithlessness on their conscience; and try to persuade themselves that by simulating a great deal of love, they are making honorable amends for the total want of it. The only possible inconvenience of the system is that of the wife seeing through the device, which generally happens.

"Nothing new, child?" he asked, in appendix to the more than usually tender kiss, and Angélique replied that there was nothing; the remark being echoed by the Cri-

mean Hero, who, astride upon a camp-stool, in the garden, opposite to Angélique and Aunt Dorotheé, on chairs, had been reading them the morning papers.

"There has been a shocking murder. An uncle cut into small pieces by his nephew, and left wrapped up in bits of newspapers on curb-stones," ejaculated Aunt Dorotheé, dismally. "I shall dream about this to-night."

"Yes, there's that in the way of news," laughed the Crimean Hero, "and amongst the electoral intelligence I see that Arcola has issued his address. You must have had a pretty serious tiff with him, Duke, to bring him up against you like this. Why, not a month ago you were hand in glove together."

"The Prince is a Bonapartist and I am not," answered Horace, uneasily, and taking up the paper.

"The address is tame," observed the Hero, as he saw Horace glancing at it.

"Very," said Horace, when he had read it through; but, perhaps, in his inmost mind he thought differently, for when he went out again to go down to the House, his brow was knit, and he stepped out of his brougham, saying to himself, that it would be a pretty thing if his political career was to be cut abruptly short by this Prince of Arcola.

It was the first time he had appeared at the Corps Législatif since his father's funeral, and on his crossing the threshold of the Debate Room, a hush fell on the assembly, then gathered for the last time prior to the dissolution. Much curiosity was there amongst the honorable members to see how their colleague would disport himself after his famous duel; some anxiety to behold whether his ducal honors had changed him, and whether he would be as much of a Radical as before. The Ministerialists on the extreme Right, who knew no compromise with duty, but voted fearlessly before God and man as they were ordered to do, wondered how M. Gribaud would bear himself towards the new duke. They had heard that M. de Hautbourg was to be opposed by Government, but they were half prepared for some touching scene of reconciliation on this last day. A solemn recantation of errors on the one hand, a magnanimous absolution on the other; much as on the breaking-up day at a private school, the boy who has been unruly during the half-year makes his humble *mea culpa*, and promises to behave better next term on condition of not being expelled. Indeed, the proceedings on the closing day of session in the Corps Législatif, closely reminded one of going-home-day, in a well-conducted academy for young gentlemen.

First, the head-usher, Minister M. Gribaud, made a speech, shortly summarizing the events of the term, complimenting the pupils on the amount of work they had done, and extolling the virtue of obedience, without which no progress is possible. Then the best pupil in the school—that is, the most prominent member on the Right—rose, and bore grateful testimony to the assistance received during work-hours by their much-esteemed teacher. He hoped M. Gribaud had found no reason to complain of the conduct of his schoolfellows, and promised on their behalf that they would endeavor to merit his approbation, both by studious attention to his precepts during the recess, and by diligent practice of the same when they returned to their work next half. Lastly, the Head-Master, President, blandly reminded everybody that they would go back to the bosom of their families with that satisfaction which the accomplishment of duty always brings—the *mens conscia recti* of which the poet speaks. He had nothing more to say but to wish them pleasant holidays, and hope that next time he and they met again, he would see them all in the enjoyment of good health; and so:—

*Ite domum, saturs; venit hesperus; ite Capellæ.*

Horace's arrival did not interrupt this programme, for nothing had yet commenced. The boys were emptying their desks of their contents and making convenient bundles of them to carry away. Some amused themselves by turning the keys of their desks in the locks, making *snap, snap* noises. The keys were to be left in the desks to-day, and not carried away, so that there was no harm in damaging them. Everybody was more or less eccentrically attired in shooting-coats and colored shirts, indicative of precipitate departure to the railway-station as soon as the school-gates should be opened; and everybody was talking at his loudest, until the entry of the unruly pupil produced the lull already mentioned.

Then, just as at school when the unruly pupil appears, all the other boys who are in disgrace instinctively rally 'round him in order to feel less isolated in their guiltiness; so when Horace took his seat he at once became the centre of a group of some thirty or forty honorable members, who, having either made incautious speeches, or so far forgotten themselves as once or twice to vote wrong; or been in any other way disobedient to M. Gribaud, during the past session, were aware that they would be left to shift for themselves at the next elections. Amongst these were the Alsatian count



who wanted Protestant school-teachers, the Gascon marquis who wished to have his brother made a Catholic bishop, and numbers of other worthies of the same calibre. All these gentlemen were vehemently opposed to the system of official candidatures. They had been official candidates themselves; but that didn't matter. Liberalism simmered in their patriotic souls. They were full of the people's rights. They could no longer conscientiously submit to see France deprived of her just liberties. Next session when re-elected — and every one of these interesting neo-liberals made certain that he would be re-elected — they would form a constitutional opposition party of which they trusted M. le Duc de Hautbourg would assume the leadership; and they would turn out M. Gribaud, not a doubt of it.

A peculiarity about these gentlemen was that, although each felt sure of his own return, they all struck commiserating attitudes in alluding to one another's chances.

"So Gribaud is going to oppose us? Well, I don't care for myself; in fact I wouldn't have accepted Government assistance, if it had been offered me. But it's uncommonly hard on you — you who only got in by an ace last time, with the bishop, prefect, and two hundred mayors, all pushing you together."

Horace was favored with condolences of this pattern by the whole of the forty.

"A crying shame, I call it, Monsieur le Duc."

"I'm proud to say Gribaud hasn't insulted me with any offers of patronage, else I would have cast them back in his face, after the manner in which he has behaved towards you." (This from a deputy who an hour before had told M. Gribaud that he had a wife and family, and that the loss of his seat would be beggary to him.)

"It seems, M. le Duc, that the Prince of Arcola is making himself very popular at Hautbourg. He has gone down there for a canvass, and is sowing his money broadcast." (This was a charitable fiction, invented on the spot.)

"I hear he is going to build them a new church." (Other charitable invention.)

"I despise the Government that sanctions bribery." (This from an honorable member who on his last return had, under Government sanction, invested ten thousand francs in corduroys, five thousand in felt hats, eight thousand in new vestments for rural clergy, and kept seventy-seven parishes drunk on the day of poll from morn till even-tide.)

"I never felt any esteem for Gribaud. Did you see what an insolent look he gave you, M. le Duc?"

"Ay, he would have deserved a slap on the face for that look."

"And would have got it, if he had given it to me."

Now here was another fiction. In order to reach his place Horace was obliged to pass M. Gribaud, and, in so doing, habitually favored him with an inclination of the head, which the Minister, of course, returned. But his Excellency's bows were far from insolent, or even stiff. They were the cautious bobs of a statesman, who, with not much diplomacy to aid him, had got to steer his way between excess of affability and the counter-excess of reserve. M. Gribaud had no desire to take up the cudgels with Horace. If the latter would koo-too to him, he asked for nothing more. As to his opposing him at Hautbourg, that was a trifle, for Horace had only to make his submission any time before the poll to be hoisted into a seat somewhere or other — only the seat would not be Hautbourg, if M. Gribaud could help it. It would be a seat whence Horace could be turned out on misbehavior — say one of those halcyon constituencies near the Pyrenees, where the wittiest nation under heaven went to the poll in droves of a thousand head, and, on a wink from their prefect, would attach thirty thousand names to a petition, calling upon their deputy to resign his place, or leave off making speeches against the Government. M. Gribaud infused all these sentiments into his bow, which would have been a very essay on Imperialist statecraft if bows, like verbal utterances, could have been taken down in short-hand. And the Minister did more, for, in the usher-like speech to his pupils going home, he held out the fold of salvation to Horace, offered him extrication from the Radical whirlpool where he was floundering, and a safe standing-ground on the *terra firma* of Bonapartism.

"I cannot conclude," said he, amidst the loud, long, and continued cheering which had greeted the first part of his oration, commenting upon the industrious labors of the session, — "I cannot conclude without a reference to one of our young and distinguished colleagues, whom we all rejoice to see in his place to-day, after the recent heavy domestic calamity which has overtaken him. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, I need not say that, in his bereavement, the honorable gentleman has our most heartfelt sympathies. It was my fortunate privilege to be, at one time, bound by ties of close friendship with the eminent Patriot who has died upon a foreign soil, and though we were afterwards estranged from each other by those differences which, alas! too often divide public men — for, in devoting our-

selves to our country's welfare, gentlemen, it is seldom that we are not compelled to sacrifice our private feelings — I can say that no one regretted the circumstance more than myself; that no one felt to the last more admiration for the chivalrous illusions of the statesman, more reverence and affection for the personal character of the man. (Loud cheers.) I would it were possible to pass unnoticed an event with which the lamented decease of our great countryman is in some way associated — I mean the scene that attended that noble Patriot's funeral; but I feel that to do so would be to miss the occasion of deducing a moral, which I hope our honorable colleague will lay seriously to heart. There are political classes and political theorists with whom no man can sympathize. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) Our honorable colleague has been able to judge for himself what is the worth of the fraternity which these persons preach and never practice. But let him be assured that, in that party, such men are not the exception; they are the rule. It is the party of envy, calumny, and incapacity, the party where every man thinks himself born with a soul to command, who has not even the patience, fortitude, and modesty to obey. For men of mere honesty to ally themselves with this faction is to risk contamination in its most insidious forms; but for a man who is gifted with youth, a great historical name, and surpassing talents to lend even his fellowship to it, would be a thing in every way sad and deplorable. It would be the wreck of a promising career, which might shine with a peerless lustre if devoted to the cause which we on these benches serve — that of order, of justice, of the prosperity and true greatness of France.

(Enthusiastic and continued cheering from the legislators on the right. The forty malcontents, clustered together in a lump, sneer, snigger, dig their elbows into one another's ribs, and whisper, "Gammon!")

Half an hour afterwards the portals had closed upon Horace's first session as a law-maker. Vehicles of every description were scurrying away from the door of the House to the four great termini. Honorable ex-deputies were bidding each other good-by and good luck; and Horace himself, ex-member for Paris, sauntered eastwards through the streets of the Circumscription which he no longer represented. There was a crowd collected without the gates of the building to watch the deputies disperse, and as every one of these gentlemen was cordially and contemptuously detested by the Radical element of the Parisian population, Horace benefited by the contrast which his relative liberalism afforded, and was cheered by about two dozen gamins. As he lifted his hat in acknowledgment of

this cheap ovation, he remembered that on that same spot, many years before he himself was born, his father had been rapturously acclaimed by a countless multitude stretching as far as the eye could see. • It was under the reign of Charles X., when outspoken Liberals were few, and when every parliamentary session offered a series of stirring popular triumphs to those who dared speak. How different his father's beginning from his own! Yet, the liberal cause had even greater need of champions now than under the Bourbons, and a career as distinguished as his father's had been open to him had he chosen to follow it. Why had he not?

Then came the reflections — But what had Manuel Gerold's career, what had his speeches and example profited, since France was in 1857 politically lower than in 1827? Was it worth while to preach freedom all one's days, to see it at last strangled in a night by a crew of adventurers, who, red-handed after the murder, had only to appeal to the nation to be forthwith absolved by seven million voices! Amongst those seven millions there were assuredly many, who, before cheering the hero of the *coup-d'état*, had cheered Manuel Gerold; and was it not the vanity of vanities to endeavor to please such weathercocks? Horace asked himself whether his father would not have done more for the true interests of France, if, instead of advocating an ideal Republic for which men were not yet ripe, he had accepted the forms of Government existing, and applied himself to improve, without subverting them. If, for instance, all the men of intellect who assailed the dynasty of Louis Philippe (and Manuel Gerold was of the number) had joined in consolidating it, the senseless revolution of '48 would never have happened, and in 1857 France would have been in the enjoyment of one of the freest constitutional monarchies in Europe. "My father was ahead of his time; I will keep on a level with mine," mentally ejaculated Horace. "If France is not Republican why should I be? The majority of the country accept the Empire: they vote for it, they prefer it to other forms of government: I may be of a contrary opinion, but as a citizen the most patriotic thing I can do is to submit. They talk to us of the prosperity of England, but England is only prosperous and free because the minorities there have learned to obey the majorities. Every man does not set up a standard of government for himself, and try and force it upon his fellows. Where is the inducement to the men who rule us to give us liberties if we say: 'Whatever you do, whether you govern us well or ill, we will combat you?' Systematic opposition excuses systematic despotism. An Eng-

lishman in my place would manage to be loyal and liberal at the same time:—liberal from principle, loyal by expediency. So will I be. By loyalty is not meant servility; I shall be no official candidate or supporter of Gribaud's. I will struggle to establish in France the parliamentary liberties which our neighbors have; and if I succeed I shall have spent my life to better purpose than as a Republican agitator, hurrying on my countrymen by utopian doctrines to bootless revolutions."

He quickened his pace. There were seductions enough in the career of French Whig, which he was sketching out for himself: it led to honors and power, in the first place, to reputation in the next. But it was indispensable that he should not lose his seat in the House; and, here, the dispiriting prognostications of his forty malcontent colleagues of a sudden chilled him. They had done their very utmost as good colleagues that they were to represent his case as desperate, and as he was in total ignorance of the steps which M. Macrobe had taken to insure his return (to do him justice, he would never have lent his countenance to those steps), he saw the Prince of Arcola in his mind's eye as already triumphant. There was but one way—one infallible way—to prevent that triumph, and Horace shook off the last relics of repugnance which he had for it.

"I must go to Clairefontaine," murmured he resolutely. "The estate is mine. It was unjustly confiscated by the ruffians of '93, and if it was bought back with slave money, the five million francs we have paid to charities during the last five years are a sufficient expiation. There is not another family would have done so much. And besides, in my hands the estate will be an instrument of good: I shall use the influence it gives me for the welfare of France."

And he shaped his course towards the Law Courts, where he hoped to find Emile.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### MANUEL GEROLD'S SONS DIVIDE HIS INHERITANCE.

"I THINK you will find Maître Emile Gerold in the Second Chamber," said an affable Briefless, in the Pleaders' Hall.

The Second Chamber was one of the Civil Courts, and not often crowded. Horace proceeded to it, pushed the folding door, and entered into quasi solitude. The auditory was scantily attended, the

barristers' benches almost empty; but the judges were at their post,—seven of them—and, what is more, they were all attentive.

Emile was speaking.

Horace subsided noiselessly into a seat, and behind him heard the following muttered dialogue between a shabby man who took snuff and an old woman who complained of rheumatics:—

*The 'Shabby Man.'*—"Hark to him, there, Madame Pomardier, he has made another point. His logic's close."

*The Rheumatic Woman.*—"Mon dieu, Monsieur Garbillaud, I knew that the young man had talent, and that's why I said to the poor young thing: 'My dear, if you will go to law—though, in my opinion, going to law for justice is like going to a puddle for spring-water—I'd see young M. Gerold. He won a suit for some neighbors of mine, poor bodies, that would never have had a sou to this day if it hadn't been for his taking up their case; but that, my dear, doesn't prove that he'll get you righted, for good luck doesn't come twice in one season,' said I."

*The S. M.*—"Hark to him again Madame Pomardier. That last argument came pat down on the nail. Do you take a pinch?"

*The R. W.*—"Thank you, not any for me, M. Garbillaud. There is that Municipal Guardsman who has swung open that door again: that man can never have had the rheumatics to let in draughts of cold air as he does. Well, as I was saying, the poor young creature she would go to law, for, says she: 'Madame Pomardier, there must be a God in heaven to prevent the weak being wronged;' and said I, 'My dear, about there being a God in heaven I don't doubt, but as to his interfering with these sort of matters I don't believe it's his way, for,' says I, 'if I was to count up on my fingers all the folk I've seen get less than they deserve, and all the other folks I've seen get more than they had a right to, I shouldn't have fingers enough; and I should be sorry to say that all was God's fault, my dear, it would be laying too much on him.' However, good words never yet mended sore trouble. She said she had right on her side, and so far as that goes; it would be a sin to gainsay her. She was properly married to her dead husband, and for that man's family to say that she wasn't and that there was some irregularity in the wedding, owing to its having been done abroad, and for them to seize that pretext to try and take away from her the two thousand francs a year, that ought to be hers, and her title of wife and widow which is what the poor young creature most cares

for, is a crying shame as I do say; and so did M. Gerold say it when she went to him about it. And I declare, it goes to one's heart, it does, to see the way the poor thing is looking at him, there, as he speaks for her — see, M. Garbillaud."

Horace followed the direction of the worthy Madame Pomardier's glance, and saw a slight young woman with a careworn face, dressed in deep black and holding a child of three or four on her knee, and gazing at Emile with an expression of anxiety and yearning suspense utterly impossible to depict. She seemed to be restraining her breath, lest the faintest sound should prevent her defender's voice from reaching the judge's ears; and when he produced any telling argument, looked from him to them with suppliant, wistful inquiry to see whether they were attending and had caught the words; and then from the judges to her child as though to mark whether, young as he was, he did not understand that it was his mother's honor that was being debated. Horace turned from this group to Emile, who was speaking as he always spoke, unaffectedly and persuasively. His manner was not that of some of his more eminent colleagues who pocket an enormous fee, read your brief half through, and plead your cause like a tired parson reading the evening lessons. There was, probably, no fee at all in this case, but the brief had been read through, every line; and more than read through — pondered over long and thoughtfully, for the words in their eloquent earnestness flowed limpid and unhesitating, coming from a mind and heart both full of their subject. There would have been a fine opportunity for a true Radical barrister to have howled democratic platitudes, shrieked anathemas against the rich who trample down the poor, and earned the good graces of the gallery by insulting the judges. But Emile as usual neglected this mode of serving his client's interests. He was modest and respectful towards the judges; and the result was no failure, for when the Imperial Magistrates returned from their council-room, it was with a judgment for the Plaintiff, on all points.

The young woman rose with her child in her arms, tottered forward to grasp the hands of her defender and swooned at his feet.

Emile lifted her gently, committed her to the care of some friends, amongst whom the worthy Madame Pomardier, who was blessing his name aloud; and came away, happy from his humble triumph, but courting, no thanks. Horace met him at the door.

It was evening and the courts were being

closed, so after Emile had unrobed himself in the vestiare, the brothers set off for the Rue Ste. Geneviève, where Emile still resided notwithstanding that the retirement of M. Pochemolle had given him a new landlord, this new landlord was also a draper and kept the name of Pochemolle with the sign of the Three Crowns over his door as of old, the privilege of doing so having been conceded to him for an increase of purchase-money. This practice, by the way, is not an uncommon one in trade, and nobody ever appears to suspect that writing Pochemolle over a house where Pochemolle no longer flourishes, has the same sort of morality about it as pasting "Old Port" on a bottle that does not contain that beverage. On the way from the Law Courts, Horace did not allude to the subject which had brought him to see Emile. He talked about the trial with emotion and admiration; and was still full of the topic when he found himself seated in his old quarters in the lodgings on the third floor above. Nothing was changed there any more than down stairs, where Horace had almost expected to see Georgette seated at her counter behind the window and look up at him as he passed. At Horace's marriage, Emile had removed into his rooms, abandoning his own to a stranger, and there stood all the things as Horace had left them, books, pictures, the table where Georgette used to lay his letters; and the shelves off which she had helped him collect the prohibited writings, that day when she had come to warn him of the domiciliary visit: "Why, I declare, you even use my old pen-holder," said he, glancing at the desk and smiling at Emile.

"My favorite pen-holder," answered his brother affectionately.

Horace took up a roll of paper that lay on the sofa — it looked like a music-roll — and, playing with it mechanically, said: "And do you mean to cleave forever to these rooms and to this life, old fellow? I was listening to you to-day. There is not a man in the Corps Législatif who can speak as you do, and I don't believe there are three at the Bar who can speak better. Every thing would be open to you if you had any ambition. Do you remember my asking you some time ago what your day-dreams were? You surely have some visions of greatness, glory, or public usefulness?"

As if to answer Horace's question, a waiter from a neighboring cookshop at that moment appeared with a basket containing Emile's dinner — the fare of an anchorite; and whilst this pitifully frugal repast was being set on the table, flanked by a half-pint decanter of the commonest *vin ordinaire*,

a poor-looking girl of twelve, who had come in behind the waiter, and turned suddenly shy at beholding a stranger, stammered: "Mother said you had left word I was to call for some wine, M. Gerold."

Blushing as if he were being caught in a mean act, Emile went to a cupboard and drew out two bottles with the well-known crimson seals of the *Château Lafite*, also a parcel. The girl seemed doubtful about the parcel being for her; but Emile whispered something, and the girl withdrew, thanking and courtesying. The same instant entered the concierge.

"M. Emile, there's that cripple down below who called the other day. He wanted to thank you for what you had sent him, but couldn't get through the streets fast enough to be at the door against your return. As he isn't able to climb the staircase, he asked me to come up and say how much obliged he is to you."

"You see," said Emile to Horace, and reddening anew, "you have lighted at the hour when I sometimes receive visits." And as he was speaking the door opened before a third applicant. This time it was a young and intelligent workman in a blouse. He had some books under his arm, and had come to return them, as well as borrow others.

"Well, Denis," said Emile, when the workman had chosen the volumes he wanted — volumes of Diderot's "Encyclopédie" — "I hope you and your friends have settled matters amicably with your employers, and that there will be no strike?"

"We feel that we have a grievance, M. Gerold," answered the workman, in a frank, respectful voice. "The profits of our employers have gone on increasing, and so has the price of living, yet the wages in our trade have not changed since the last ten years. But I have told the men what you thought, and they deputed me to say that they would be guided by you, and that if, after giving them a hearing, you were of opinion that their present demands were not fair, they would modify them."

Horace had not uttered a word during this succession of interviews; but whilst the workman was speaking he opened the scroll he had taken up. It was an address signed by five thousand mechanics of the Tenth Circumscription, and offering Emile their suffrages for the seat which he himself was about to vacate. The memorialists wrote that they had been reluctantly compelled to vote against M. Horace Gerold at the last election, being persuaded that his views did not tally with theirs, but they had the utmost confidence in the principles of M. Emile, and, if he would

come forward, undertook to return him free of expense. Horace laid down this document with feelings easy to understand, and watched the workman take his leave: which he did with the air of a man who bows to nothing save intellect, but bends the knee before that.

When he was gone Horace took up the scroll again.

"And have you accepted this offer?" said he to Emile.

"Accepted an offer that contains an implied slight on you!" answered Emile, sadly and a little reproachfully. "You could not think it. In so far as public opinion is concerned, together we stand or fall."

"Yes, we will, will we not?" exclaimed Horace in an outburst of eagerness, laying his hand on his brother's shoulders. "Let us stand by each other, Emile; and we may attain fame side by side. I have resolved upon going to Clairefontaine, and do you come with me. Our landed interest can insure our being both elected in the department, and we can labor together for the true interests of France, and for the glory of our own family name. Whilst our father was alive I respected his ideas about Clairefontaine, but by renouncing that estate any longer we shall be discarding the means of doing a great good: we shall be like soldiers throwing away their best weapons before battle."

He spoke at length and enthusiastically, unfolding all the plans he was forming, and revealing new ones, as they started extemporized to his brain. The immense services that could be rendered to the Liberal cause was the chord on which he harped most strenuously, knowing that it was the one which would strike the surest echo; and the burden of his whole discourse was that for such an end as that any honorable means were justifiable.

Emile listened to him without apparent surprise, though not able to repress the shade of disappointment that stole over his face.

"I was prepared for your resolution about Clairefontaine," said he quietly. "And the moment you differed from any of the opinions which rendered the sacrifice imperative on our father, a like sacrifice ceased to be binding upon you. But it gives me some pain, dear fellow, to think of your rallying to the Second Empire; I would have heard a great deal of bad news sooner than that."

"But I don't rally in the sense of liking or respecting this régime, nor for my own profit," exclaimed Horace. "Why, man, to take a comparison, I shall be only doing what you did this very afternoon. Did you respect the judges before whom you

pleaded? You know what kind of men the Empire has placed on the judicial bench, yet in your client's interest you silenced all your own feelings, spoke reverentially to these men, and won your cause. Well, France will be my client; I will plead for her rights, and in order to obtain them will defer to those who hold her freedom in their keeping. That is all."

The comparison was not inapt, but it failed to shake Emile, who answered: "We cannot always make our sentiments fit with logic; and perhaps I shall have given you the best of my reasons when I say that as our father's bones must rest in exile so long as this empire lasts, I could never have the courage to support it. Then, I do not believe the Empire will ever restore our liberties, for those who respect freedom do not begin by destroying it. But supposing I should be mistaken, it seems to me there would still be grounds for refusing our allegiance. The establishment of the Second Empire was one of the most wanton outrages ever perpetrated upon a peaceful community, and it is like offering a premium for such acts when honorable men lend their countenance to those who commit them."

"That is all very well," cried Horace, excitedly, "but the remark may be reduced to this: that you would rather see France fettered under the Second Empire than free from it?"

"Yes, I would," replied Emile firmly. "I think in the first place our country should learn what it costs to set up a despot; and in the next I would not let crowned desperadoes suppose that they may be left to reign in peace by restoring liberties which they have dishonestly plundered. Of a robber we ask more than restitution, we demand atonement. I would have patriots hold aloof from the authors of *coups-d'état*—leave them to themselves until they fell by their own weakness, or finished as they began in violence."

There was a silence. Emile had spoken with perfect calm, but with a kindling light in his eye—just the light that comes of immovable purpose assailed by sharp arguments, the spark that flashes between flint and steel. Horace exclaimed dejectedly: "It is no use trying to convert you. You reason like a man who sets up an ideal world for himself, and will not see that you can benefit your species more by taking account of their foibles and errors and bearing with them, than by preaching to them a standard of political excellence that is quite beyond their reach. Progress does not fly on the wing, it plods on tediously. In a hundred years men will not yet be ripe for the republic you propose."

Why then sacrifice your life to it? Look at our father's career. What was it?—a pure and generous one; but whom has it benefited?"

"Every lover of what is good," answered Emile, quickly. "Every man who proposes to his fellows a high standard of excellence in politics, art, or social conduct, is a benefactor of humanity. And what does it matter if our father's example has found few imitators? Did Raphael paint his 'Transfiguration' in vain because no picture like it has since been produced; or did Milton write to no purpose because 'Paradise Lost' will remain unrivalled? The life of an honest man is a beautiful poem; and every human being who reads it will feel better, stronger, more hopeful from it. But even if none understood the life, and if none were found to take pattern by it, there it would still remain—the highest, finest, and noblest work of God." He took down from a shelf one of the early editions of a book, then but lately published, and interdicted in France, Victor Hugo's "Châtiments;" and pointing to a page, said, "Read this passage. Do you think this will be thrown away? It will redeem our character as a people in the eyes of future generations. When historians write that seven million Frenchmen fell down and worshipped the man who enslaved them, it will be remembered that there was a patriot who wrote this, and that he found companions, our father amongst them, and the memory of these few men will save a whole nation from odium."

Horace read the verses. They were the immortal lines of the poet speaking in his exile.

"Devant les trahisons et les têtes courbées  
Je croiserais les bras. Indigné mais serein;  
Sombre fidélité pour les choses tombées,  
Sois ma force et ma joie et mon pilier d'airain!"

Où, tant qu'il sera là, qu'on cède ou qu'on persiste,  
O France, France aimée et qu'on pleure toujours,  
Je ne reverrai pas ta terre douce et triste;  
Tombeau de mes aïeux et nid de mes amours;

Je ne reverrai pas ta rive qui nous tente,  
France, hors le devoir, hélas! j'oublierai tout;  
Parmi les éprouves je planterai ma tente:  
Je resterai proscrit, voulant rester debout.

J'accepte l'apre exil! n'eut-il ni fin, ni terme;  
Sans chercher à savoir et sans considérer  
Si quelqu'un a plié qu'on aurait cru plus ferme,  
Et si plusieurs s'en vont qui devraient demeurer.

Si l'on n'est plus que mille, et bien j'en suis, si même  
Ils ne sont plus que cent, je brave encore Sylla;  
S'il en demeure dix, je serai le dixième:  
Et s'il n'en reste qu'un, je serai celui-là."

"Well, I have nothing more to say," replied Horace, closing the book. "I see we must walk our separate ways. If I am wrong, let me bear the consequences; but I am acting for the best. I have no vocation

for the life you would lead: to adopt it would therefore be hypocrisy. In a few days I shall start for Clairefontaine. My wife and my father-in-law both urge me to this course, and it would have given me strength and courage if your good wishes had accompanied me."

"My good wishes you have," exclaimed Emile, earnestly; "and my approval, too, if you are following the bent of your conscience—a man's best guide. Besides, you are my brother, and if your opinions were ten times more opposed to mine than they are, I would still wish them success for your sake."

"And what do you mean to do with your own share of the estate?" asked Horace, a little moved; "remember, half of it is yours."

"I had almost forgotten it," answered Emile, with a sigh; and he began reflecting a moment: then turning with an appealing look of affection to his brother, he faltered: "Look here, Horace: you won't think I am trying to sermonize you or put you to the blush; but don't ask me to have any thing to do with this money. You say the landed influence of Clairefontaine is what you most want: well, then, let the whole estate remain yours. And as to the revenues of that part of it which would have been mine, dispose of them as you will: I give them over to you in trust for the public good—yes, for the public good."

He laid both hands on his brother's shoulders and kissed him, impulsively, fervently.

In this way they parted; but when an hour or two later the waiter from the cookshop returned to fetch his plates away, he found the dinner standing untasted as he had laid it. Emile was sitting by the open window, his arms resting on the sill and his head buried in them.

"Don't you dine, sir?" asked the waiter, coaxingly.

Emile started, and the question had to be repeated. Then he answered absently that he had no appetite. The epilogue to which was that on reaching the cookshop the waiter observed, "That poor M. Emile does take on terribly about his father's death; I found him broken down like just now, and I'll stake my head he'd been crying."

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### ANGÉLIQUE'S CONFESSION.

CERTAINLY the most edifying priest in Paris was Father Glabre of the Reverend

Society of Jesus. He had a voice like a sweet barrel-organ, a smile that did one good to witness, and walked the road to the Kingdom of Heaven in polished leather shoes. This holy man's church was that of St. Hyacinth, and on the Sundays when he preached there was a great tail of carriages stretching outside the church door on both sides of the street, and footmen in plush hanging about the porch enough to make a goodly battalion. But Father Glabre was seen to greatest advantage on "Confession Mornings." Confession mornings were Wednesdays and Fridays. On those days Father Glabre gave ear to the sins of his flock, chided gently and bestowed absolution. It is to be supposed that the male element in the St. Hyacinth congregation were either singularly free from human error or lamentably blind to their own shortcomings, or painfully remiss in their religious duties; anyhow, no trussed penitent was ever seen to kneel in Father Glabre's confessional and declare himself a miserable sinner. But the women made up for this. What a throng, and what devotion! What a rustling of silk dresses, what contrite rows of six-buttoned gloves clasped daintily over velvet missals, what pretty attempts to corrupt that righteous servant of the church, the beadle, in order to secure a privileged seat whence one might dart into the tribunal of repentance out of one's turn! There were so many ladies that it was a sort of point of honor between them that none should take more than five minutes over the recital of their sins. Most of them cheated and took ten minutes, and said even then that they had not half done; which used to make M. Gousset remark, that, next to the pleasure of sinning itself, there was nothing women liked better than remembering their sins and talking about them. This M. Gousset used to make other impertinent speeches. To one lady acquaintance who told him she was about to confess herself, he had been known to say: "I protest against your going and demoralizing that good man;" and to another who had just come from confession: "And how did the poor fellow bear up against it?"

The church of St. Hyacinth was in the same quarter as the Hôtel Macrobe, and one of Father Glabre's most punctual parishioners was Angélique. She was punctual in this sense, that she and her aunt had sittings close to the chancel, and might be seen in them every Sunday morning at high mass, whether the reverend father preached or not. But she did not often attend confession, and when she did, had more than enough with the regulation five minutes. The fact is, she scarcely

understood the ceremony. She had a kind of idea that those of her own sex who did not attend Father Glabre's confessional at least once in the half-year would find it disagreeable for them at some distant day of reckoning; but wherefore it should be so, why women should need this ordeal more than men, and wherefore, above all, an indispensable preliminary to salvation should consist of kneeling for ten minutes in the year in an oak box, were questions which she was content to class amongst the sublime mysteries of the holy Catholic Church, not intended to be fathomed by the faithful. One day, however, it occurred to her — as a new use for some long familiar object may strike an observer — that there might, perhaps, be something more in this practice of confession than appeared in the kneeling and avowing that one had been reading good books and found them dull, which was what Angélique's disclosures generally amounted to. Might not the priest be a friend to whom one could unburden one's heart in moments of sore difficulty, and from whom one could receive advice that one dare not ask of mundane friends or relatives? That Angélique should have arrived at this thought by her own unaided self; that it should have come to her in the light of a boon; and that she should have contemplated at once availing herself of the opportunities it revealed to her, were proofs of how lonely she must have felt her life to be, and of how great a fund of trouble must have been stored up in her simple heart since she yearned to relieve herself to any one, even to a stranger.

Yes, lonely and full of trouble, though she would have been at a loss to define what was the nature of the confession she wished to make, and what sort of solace it was she hoped to obtain. Womanlike, or rather childlike, she went no farther in her reflections than beyond this point, — that she was unhappy; and, with the touching confidence of those who suffer, believed that all save herself could prescribe for her pain, and assuage it. So, when Father Glabre preached she listened to him with the anxious attention we bestow on those in whom we think of confiding, examined his features intently, and felt her heart flutter when he looked and spoke in her direction. And when, one Sunday, he announced that during the Easter season he would be at home at stated times to hear the confessions of penitents who were unable to attend at the church hours, — or those, he might have added, whose confessions necessitated developments, — she took mental note of the days he had named, and waited for the first of them with a

trepidation that almost counted the minutes.

It was on the day of the close of the Corps Législatif session that Angélique went to Father Glabre's. She had, of course, spoken her intention to no one, and had even been compelled to use stratagem to rid herself of the Crimean Hero.

Father Glabre had not been apprised beforehand of her visit, but, on receiving the name of the Duchess of Hautbourg, hurried out with more than his usually unctuous welcome. Somehow, he seemed agitated and unduly pleased at her visit, as if it were a stroke of good luck that he had not expected, but which he had particular and private reasons for rejoicing at.

The sanctum where he led her was dim, half oratory, half study. The furniture, scanty, but rich and prelatial, attracted the eye by its appropriateness, and reposed it by its good taste. There were no books, excepting a red-leaved breviary; but, — unlooked-for thing in such a place, — an open newspaper had been thrown on a chair; and had Angélique been collected enough to make such an observation, she might have noticed that this was not a clerical journal, but a purely financial organ.

However, she was not collected enough for any thing; for now that she was alone with the priest, who was to smooth her troubles away, every thing she had thought of saying seemed to have oozed completely out of her memory. But Father Glabre was cognizant of this symptom from having often witnessed it before; and in his most dulcet, winning tones, set himself to allay the nervousness. There was a comfortable softly-cushioned fall-stool for such of the fair penitents as held strictly to the rubric of observances, and could not have been persuaded to recite their *mea-culpas* otherwise than in a posture of humiliation, kneeling on thick velvet; but Father Glabre liked an informal conversation better. He was a man of the world. He saw with pleasure Angélique drop into the arm-chair he offered her; took another for himself, not too close, nor too far from her; and, pending the moment when she should have recovered from her shyness, spoke in an easy, re-assuring way with modulated accents about nothing in particular, and more or less about every thing. It was mere child's play to this consummate ecclesiastic to draw a confession from such a penitent as Angélique. He saw that at a glance, and quietly bided his time. Mon dieu, there were ladies who gave him trouble! Certain lovely but provoking sinners were quite willing to render their confession to the holy church Catholic,



but they were determined, as it were, that the holy church Catholic should not get things too cheap. The reverend father had to wrestle with these, to cajole, to finesse, to extract the confession in unshapely fragments piecemeal; and, when at last it was all out, there would sometimes be nothing to show but a little bit of a sin that would not pay for the trouble of pulling up. An hysteric penitent, who looked as much overwhelmed as if she was fresh from committing six at least out of the seven deadly sins, had one day kept herself on her knees, and the reverend Father Glabre on tenter-hooks, for three-quarters of an hour by the onyx clock on the mantle-piece, only to avow in the end that she had eaten a ham sandwich on Ash Wednesday! Ah! all is not *couleur de rose* in the life of a confessor!

But Angélique gave none of this trouble. When Father Glabre had sufficiently laid the dust on the penitent's path by the refreshing dew of his small-talk, he began discreetly to touch upon the soothing mission of the church, in receiving secrets and giving comfort in exchange. And then — after a last self-struggle — Angélique confessed herself — said all she had to say, in a low, plaintive voice, with interjection of sighs and occasional tears; but without stopping. Women who are habitually reticent of words will speak in exceptional moments with a quiet fluency that is astonishing. Angélique unfolded the whole tale of her life; which on her lips sounded a very disappointed, unhappy story indeed. She related how she had been married; the history of Georgette's attachment for her husband; the comparative felicity of the first months of her wedded life when she thought her husband perhaps really loved her as much as he said. Then, her perplexities in her divided allegiance between husband and father; her attempts to obey the latter in prevailing upon Horace to resume his estates; her powerlessness to influence him; and finally the certainty that he no longer loved her, and that she had made his life wretched by marrying him. Horace was always kind to her, but she could see that he was weary of her. He remained less and less with her every day; and every day took long rides, she had no need to be told where. She knew it was to Meudon.

Father Glabre had nothing to do but to listen in silence. Now and then he put a short, pertinent question to help him connect all the links of the narrative, but he made no answer, until half relieved, but bruised and shivering after her confession, Angélique ceased speaking and hid her face in her handkerchief.

"You could not have come to a surer fountain of comfort than the church, dear lady," he then said in his most assuaging tones. "Your sorrows are great, but our sympathy is proportionate."

It was not Father Glabre's way to remind his fair votaries much that he was a priest. He preferred the character and language of friend; but his discourse was just enough garnished with ecclesiastical phrase to give it the extra force and prestige that were needed to carry it home. So his exhortations to Angélique were exactly what they should have been — benign, compassionate, hopeful; savoring a little of the pulpit, a great deal of the drawing-room, still more of the place where they were — the confidential retreat. As to the part of the narrative respecting the Clairefontaine intrigue, the Catholic priest could have but one opinion, which was shared by the man of the world and the brotherly adviser. It was a wife's duty to rescue her husband from all such contamination as would result from a long connection with the enemies of religion (read "Liberals"), and the Duke of Hautbourg should undoubtedly be urged to resume a position, where, properly guided (read, "by you, Madame, under my instruction"), he would render most signal services to the church. Coming to Angélique's domestic sorrows, Father Glabre trod lightly on the delicate ground; though he knew every inch of it, and had nothing to fear from its pitfalls. This was not, by a good many dozens, the first story of connubial woe he had been made to listen to. But his experience of such cases was that women confess their suspicions in order that the priest may dispel them; so that he carefully eschewed the blunder of admitting even by implication that there was any foundation for Angélique's fears. On the contrary, he strove to show that we often take alarm on slender proof, and that our doing so is a virtue since it only argues excess of love; "but," added he softly, "let us not neglect probabilities," and the probabilities on which he dilated were that the Duke of Hautbourg, being a man of taste and culture, was not likely to prefer a person in a very subordinate sphere of life, and no doubt uneducated, to the gifted and accomplished lady he had before him. There are few lines of argument more sure of success than that which consists of proving to a woman that her rival is not to be named in the same day with her; and the Rev. Father Glabre said enough to dismiss a dozen ordinary women on their way with tears dried and hearts leaping. But Angélique was not an ordinary woman.

"Ah," said she, sadly, shaking her head,

"you don't know my husband, nor Georgette Pochemolle, Father. She is more educated than I am, and her rank is not lower than what mine would have been had my father not become so rich. But I am not jealous of her. She is worthier of him than I, and how can I blame my husband because he has eyes to see it? But it would have been so much better if he had perceived this before our marriage; for, now, what am I to do? Yet it is a terrible thing for him to be joined all his life to a woman he does not like, when there is another near who might make him so happy."

Unaccustomed as he was to betray astonishment at any thing—indeed there were few things surprised him—the Rev. Father Glabre slightly opened his eyes at this; not quite sure whether he had heard aright. Angélique caught his look and guessed the meaning of it.

"Oh, yes!" continued she, with artless melancholy, "I love my husband. I did not know at first what love was; but when I came to feel happy at his being near me, and sad when he looked sad, I understood that this was love. Only I don't think it would be love if I thought of him only for myself. Sometimes, when he was not looking at me, I have watched him, and seen his face darken, and I have said to myself: 'This is because of me,' and then I have felt that I would do any thing—any thing on earth, to keep that cloud from his brow. Do you know what it is to feel this? To sit and reflect whether there is any means by which we can take away some one's suffering and add it to our own, and not to find any? For the more I looked, the more dark things seemed to me; and something like a voice in the night—yes, it was like that, the voice of something within that only speaks when one is alone, or when one lies awake and cannot sleep—kept saying to me that I was guilty for this. You see, I had only to say no when he asked me to be his wife, and he would have gone away and soon forgotten me; for he never really loved me—never felt for me as I do now for him. But I was afraid. I was afraid of my father," repeated she, with something of shuddering terror in her accent. "He desired this marriage, and though I did not understand why, then, I have begun to think lately that I could guess; and if what I suspect is true, and that the poor boy was half inveigled into the match, then I am more guilty than human words can tell, and all the sorrow that overtakes me is just. But it is not just that he should suffer because I was weak and cowardly," and she fixed her eyes upon the priest with such a deep expression of sorrow, that he stood speechless before this grief, of which

he had never yet seen an example, and which he could scarcely comprehend.

But sensibility was not a foible against which the reverend father was often obliged to pray Heaven to guard him. To be just, he must have been endowed at his birth with a larger share of this virtue than usually falls to one man, had he retained much of it after all he had heard in that room. A town doctor may be said to lose his illusions before his hair turns gray, a solicitor before his teeth have begun to loosen, but a town confessor loses his before the gloss has yet vanished from his first cassock. So it was not the fault of Father Glabre, but rather of the generation which had whispered its sins into his ear, if, after a moment's stupefaction, he should have darted a rather keen glance at the woman, who, for a moment, had thrown him off his impassiveness; and then fallen to musing. Imagine a man who has a new contrivance presented to him: knows there is a catch in it, and wants to discover what that catch is; and you will have before you the Reverend Father Glabre attempting to divine what could be at the bottom of the Duchess of Hautbourg's confession, and feeling baffled.

Seeing him looking at her with benevolence—for whatever might be brewing within the reverend father's head, his countenance remained unalterably benevolent—Angélique murmured mournfully: "It has done me good, father, to confide all this to you, for I have no one at home to whom I could speak. There is my aunt, but I should only sadden her, and she could do nothing for me; and of course this is not a matter for my cousin's ears."

"Your cousin is married?" asked Father Glabre.

"It is not a lady," said Angélique. "He is staying with us until he rejoins his regiment. He is in the Carbineers."

"Oh!" replied Father Glabre; and this "Oh!" as it was uttered by him was a thing to hear. The number of cousins in the Carbineers whom the reverend father had met lurking in the side-shifts of domestic dramas was one of the curious facts of his experience: Nevertheless, he abstained from embracing hasty conclusions, and it was well that he did so, for a few more questions answered with the naivest candor convinced him that, whether he felt disposed to own it or no, he had come this day upon a—to him—new type of Parisian woman—one who, amidst the corruptions of the Babel City, and, though placed in circumstances where every thing conspired to ensnare her, had kept the guileless innocence of a child. Then something akin to pity took possession of this priest. It was the

feeling of a hard soldier who finds, wandering, in the midst of a raging battle, a young and defenceless woman. The sceptical Jesuit felt tempted to exclaim: "What are you doing amongst us, my poor child? what hope is there for you in a world like ours?" And with a perceptible shrug he reflected to himself: "Here is a fair creature who has more love for her husband than he deserves. But how will it end? A part of this affection, which he disdains, she will one day transfer to the Carbineer. *Eheu me!* what an oft-told fable is this!"

But aloud he said, with most considerate gentleness: "Dear lady, there is nothing in all you have related from which I can gather that the slightest particle of blame attaches to you. Your own conduct has been exempt from reproach; and let me persist in hoping that such is also the case with the Duke of Hautbourg. But were it otherwise I would remind you, less as a priest than as a man who has seen much and had many opportunities of marking the courses of human weakness, that illicit passions never last long, and that the man whose affections stray for a while from his own hearth, soon returns to it contrite, with a new craving for that peace which can only be found in domestic life. It is Heaven's will that it should be so. The satiety that cloy irregular appetites is a visible manifestation of the protection which Heaven accords to the holy institution of matrimony. Dear lady, trust in this to the healing grace of time. Your husband's heart will surely be yours again, and the sooner if you persevere in the wise and feeling course you have adopted of not letting it be seen that you have suspected him. This is but a passing trial: 'Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'"

He gave her absolution *pro formâ*, pushing a hassock for her to kneel on during the rite; but she knelt humbly on the floor, and in accepting the assistance of his arm to rise when it was over, thanked him in a meek feeble voice for his forbearance in listening to her. He replied with a few more cheering and politic counsels, and this put an end to the clerical portion of the interview. The priest then gave way to the man of the world, or rather, in this case, to the man of business; for it was then that stood revealed the signification of the sudden look of gladness that had illumined the reverend Father's features at the sight of Angélique, and also the secret of the financial organ displayed on a chair. As he conducted Angélique out of the oratory, her black glove lightly resting on his sleeve, like a small bird, the eloquent Jesuit said, not without some anxiety in his voice: "Madame la Duchesse, have you heard

that the *Crédit Parisien* is ailing in any way?"

"No," answered Angélique, surprised but uninterested, for the *Crédit Parisien* and its concerns were as so much Sanscrit to her.

"You relieve me," exclaimed the Rev. Father, who looked in truth relieved. "There were some disquieting rumors afloat, but your denial of course shows me they were unfounded. If you will permit me," said he, stopping, and running back to fetch the paper—"you will see *Madame la Duchesse*"—and he pointed to the column headed "*BOURSE*"—"the money article adopts a certain tone of alarm. It says (excuse me for reading):—'There was a new fall on *Crédit Parisien* securities this day. The closing price of the shares was one thousand two hundred and thirty francs, showing a decrease of thirty francs on yesterday's quotations, and of three hundred and twenty francs as compared with the quotations of this day a month ago.' Not that I personally have any reason to feel uneasy at this," added the Father, with a deprecating little smile; "but I have been given to understand that sundry members of the church—some religious corporations I believe—have invested a part of their small means in the company which your eminent father governs so ably, and it was on their behalf that I experienced a little uneasiness."

Translated into French this speech meant, that the Rev. Father Glabre being not unprovided with this world's goods, and entertaining that same affection for ten per cent as his contemporaries, had been touched by the prevailing epidemic, and bought some *Crédit Parisien* shares at one thousand four hundred francs. Whence a certain degree of stupefaction, followed by doubt and distracting meditations, when these shares, after rising to one thousand five hundred and fifty francs, had suddenly begun to fall. Should he sell out at the unpleasant, but comparatively small loss of one hundred and seventy francs per share, so as to avoid a greater sacrifice by and by; or was this merely a temporary depression from which the company would recover in a week or two? This is what he would have liked to learn of the eminent M. Macrobe's daughter, and it is this that had caused him to look upon her visit as a truly providential event.

Angélique glanced ruefully at the shareholder, much as a girl of the Malay Archipelago might in trying to decipher a music-scroll.

"I have not heard that there was any thing wrong," said she. "My father has not told me any thing. But I will ask him, if you like."

"Oh, pray do not take that trouble!" an-

swered Father Glabre, smirking unctuously. "Only if Madame la Duchesse can gather *indirectly*" (a slight stress on this word) "from M. Macrobe what the state of the case really is, perhaps she will kindly remember that the servants of the Church resemble Lazarus more than Dives, and give me such information as may enable me to save them in time from losing their little all."

"Oh, certainly!" said Angélique, with feeling, and this reminded her that she had in her pocket a purse filled with money that she never wanted, and which generally melted in instalments to beggars. She fumbled for it furtively and extracted a thousand-franc note which she pressed into the father's hand at parting: "For the poor of your parish, Father," she murmured.

But riding homewards she did not feel as though her confession had given her the relief she had sought. The palliation to her suffering had been only temporary. Whilst Father Glabre spoke, she had seen a faint ray of sunshine gleaming through the clouds; but, now, the horizon on which her mind's eyes were fixed seemed as colorless, as bereft of hope, as ever. It seemed even vaguely menacing. For, — as in moments when the atmosphere is heavy, — an oppressive sensation stole over her spirit, an undefined presentiment of events near at hand, which would concern her, towards which she was slowly drifting, and which loomed ahead of her like reefs in the hazy night of the future.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### A PANIC.

THE Reverend Vicar of St. Hyacinth's had not exaggerated matters in talking of the disquieting rumors that were bruited about the *Crédit Parisien*. The rumors were very disquieting indeed to those who had money in that enterprise; and amongst these, to our friend, the Prince of Arcola.

Seated at his breakfast-table in travelling attire, with a British-looking teapot and a still more British-looking muffin before him, he read "The Times" newspaper, and thus conversed with Bateson, who, railway-tables in hand, was taking a survey of the trains that left for Hautbourg that day: —

"Bateson, have you not shares in the *Crédit Parisien*?"

"Yes, my lord."

"And it is I who did counsel you to buy

them. How long ago was that, do you remember?"

"Two years ago, my lord."

"And at how much the shares were they?"

"I bought ten shares, my lord," responded the punctilious Bateson, "at seven hundred and eighty-five francs each."

The Prince drew out his pencil-case, scrawled a multiplication sum on the margin of his "Times," and said, half-apologetically: — "Bateson, I have much fear that this company is not what I thought. They have made to run noises on its account, and if these noises be true the shareholders will lose their money."

Bateson stood calmly motionless. The idea that a French company, trading in a French land, could presume to make him, Bateson, a British subject, lose his money, was a thing slow to strike him as being within the range of possibilities. There are forms of audacity which it requires an effort to realize. At length he asked, with imperturbable composure: "Then the company is a swindle, my lord?" And one could divine the unspoken corollary: "In which case, I shall feel it my duty, on public grounds, to lodge a complaint against them at Bow Street."

"Well, Bateson, one rarely knows in these misadventures whom to blame," said the Prince with a patient shrug. "What I wanted to say is, that you must not lose by my advice. You should sell your shares now; but, as we are going out of town to-day, perhaps it would be difficult to see your broker in time. Suppose, then, you pass them to me. I will take them at the day before yesterday's quotations, as given here in 'The Times,' — 1,275 francs."

"And yourself, my lord?"

"Oh! do not be in pain for me, I will sell yours along with mine. But you shall have what they call a clause of redemption, Bateson; that is in the case where the shares should come to rise again, I will return them to you for what I gave. That shall be only fair."

The mind of Bateson took in the business-like aspects of this operation, and discovered that the proposal was advantageous, not to say uncommonly handsome, for which ever way the wind veered, he, Bateson, a British subject, would be the gainer.

"I am infinitely obliged to you, my lord," he said.

"Then, Bateson, it is an affair concluded. If you will give me my cheque-book, which is on that table, I will sign you a draft for the sum, twelve thousand seven hundred and fifty francs, or five hundred and ten pounds sterling, in your currency."

Which was done. Then the Prince be-

gan a second sum in pencil for his own particular behoof, and by multiplying five hundred and fifty francs (money paid for his own shares) by eight thousand (number of shares bought) arrived at the pleasant conclusion that if the *Crédit Parisien* were to founder, he should be four million four hundred thousand francs, or one hundred and seventy-six thousand pounds sterling, out of pocket. But this was not all. There were one or two other persons besides Bateson whom the Prince had advised in all good faith to invest their savings in the *Crédit Parisien*; and that he was morally bound not only to guarantee these people from loss, but also to prevent them from selling to others, shares which he now knew to be worthless, seemed to him a fact as incontrovertible as noonday. So Bateson was despatched below to make financial inquiries of, and enter into transfer negotiations with, the coachman, major-domo, and chef-de-cuisine, three important functionaries who lived in clover under the princely roof, and by dint of occult perquisites, accumulated salaries which allowed them to look down upon captains of the line, country vicars, and judges of first instance, as meanly paid officials. And the upshot of Mr. Bateson's embassy was, that before another half-hour had sped, three more cheques on the bank of MM. Lecoq, Roderheim and Macrobe found their way from the breakfast-room to the commons.

Thereupon, the Prince, rid of a double load — load of uneasiness, and load of money — finished breakfasting, and endeavored, with as much coolness as the circumstances admitted, to foresee what would become of him if he were ever ruined. He should have to renounce his hopes of winning the English Derby, that was clear; but he might have to renounce many other things besides that. Perhaps this political life — which he was now about to embrace for the sake of punishing a rival — he might be compelled to cleave to from necessity.

It would be something to have the deputy's salary of 500*l.* on which to fall back; and then the deputyships led to other things — senatorships, ambassadorships, Ministerial portfolios. He mentally followed himself, pursuing the steep by-paths, the tortuous labyrinths, the break-neck highways that conduct one to places such as that which M. Gribaud occupied; and, at the prospect, he winced a little, for it was not one that consorted with his ideal of an agreeable life's journey. In which predicament of mind he betook himself to reading his letters, of which a goodly heap had been brought in contemporaneously with "The Times." There was one he had been

expecting from M. Gribaud's secretary. Some days before, alarmed at the congratulations of friends, who had been assuring him that the Government was going to have the peasantry round Hautbourg marched to the poll in imposing columns, like herds of horned cattle, he had written to request that no support of that kind might be afforded him, but that he might be allowed to fight out the battle with his adversary on equal terms — a fair field, and no favor. In answer to this M. Gribaud's secretary wrote: —

"MONSIEUR LE PRINCE, — I am directed by M. Gribaud to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and to say that Government will, at your desire, abstain from taking any active part in the contest between yourself and M. le Duc de Hautbourg. At the same time, his Excellency requests me to state that it cannot be expected, neither would it be desirable, that the authorities should conceal their very sincere wishes for your success.

"I have the honor to remain,

"Monsieur le Prince,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"C. DE BEAUFEUILLET."

The Prince had not restored this letter to its envelope before Bateson re-appeared to say that M. Macrobe had called. Was his lordship at home?

The hour was early, but his lordship *was* at home. He had no reason to shirk seeing the financier, who was his friend as well as his banker, for conventionally, at least, the coolness with Horace was not supposed to cause any estrangement from Horace's father-in-law. Moreover, the rumors that were busy with the good name of the *Crédit Parisien* rendered the Prince not unnaturally anxious to sound the respected chairman as to what might definitely happen to the mammoth enterprise, erst so lusty. He was not quite naïve enough to expect that M. Macrobe would confess it if the reports were true; but he fancied he should have sagacity enough to discern, by the financier's manner, whether there were any real danger under the surface. As for M. Macrobe, the secret of his visit to the Prince might have been found in a confidential note from M. Louchard, which he carried in the breast-pocket of his coat. Here was that note: —

\* "SIR, — The big goose has proved tough;

\* "SIR, — The Prefect has proved incorruptible; no amount of bribing will buy him. Some of the minor officials are open to offers, but they can be of but little use to us without the Prefect. My most trusted agent has canvassed the borough electors, and those in the country districts. He is not dissat-

no amount of boiling will sodden him. Some of the goslings are tender enough, but they will not make a dish without the goose. My farm bailiff has examined the pigs in the sty, and those in the meadow. He is not dissatisfied with the former, but gives a poor account of the latter. The rooks will cut up tender, if seasoned with the patent sauce; otherwise I fear they will be uneatable. This is the story with the rest of the fowls. The sauce, the sauce! else your friend will never be able to digest his dinner!

"ROBERT VINCENT.

"P. S.—I put the tenderest, plumppest, and handsomest of our chickens into the same pot as the goose. It was of no use. That bird must have been furiously strong on the wing. His weight is enormous."

Coupled with the very serious complexion which the affairs of the *Crédit Parisien* were assuming, and with this circumstance, that, on the preceding day — being that on which the *Corps Législatif* had been dissolved — M. Macrobe had not seen his son-in-law, and was consequently in ignorance of the resolution to which he had finally come, this note of M. Louchard's was a most portentous warning. The financier was beginning to feel that the odds were turning against him. He had yet two cards to play, however, and the first of these was to try and effect a reconciliation between Horace and the Prince, in order that the latter might be induced to retire. He did not despair of this chance.

The two men being mutually interested in keeping on good terms with each other, shook hands with tolerable cordiality; and M. Macrobe at once took the bull by the horns, by saying cheerily: "In travelling garb I see, mon Prince. Bound for Hautbourg?"

"Yes, saddled for the road," smiled the Prince. "The session only closed yesterday, and I believe it is a point of etiquette not to begin canvassing until the dissolution, in order that all the candidates may have an equal start."

"Good practice; if well observed," returned the financier, as cheerily as before, "but it isn't. To continue the racing

isled with the former, but gives a poor account of the latter. The clergy will be on our side, if the Duke of Hautbourg goes to his estates; otherwise there is no reliance to be placed on them. This is the story with the rest of the constituency. Let the Duke return to Clafontaine, or he will never win his election.

"MOISE LOUCHARD.

"P. S.—I set the wildest, most influential, and prettiest of the ladies in our pay to cajole the Prefect. It was of no use. He must have been promised promotion in the event of his defeating the Duke. He is working the screw with tremendous vigor."

metaphor, your prefect is putting all his nags into training, and spiking the course for our colt."

"I have heard that he has been showing too much zeal and am sorry for it. See, I wrote to the Government on the very subject, and here is their answer" (he handed the secretary's letter). "I have no wish to win any victory, but such as I may be proud of."

"But come, why do you want a victory at all?" exclaimed M. Macrobe, sinking into an arm-chair, and looking coaxingly into the Prince's face. "Don't let us have any mystery about this, mon Prince. I know why you have quarrelled with my son-in-law. It is about that little bit of a girl, Georgette Pochemolle. But frankly, is it worth the while of two gentlemen to fall out about such a trifle?"

"It is no trifle in my eyes when a friend of mine misconducts himself," answered the Prince dryly. "Since our quarrel is no secret to you, M. Macrobe, you must be aware of what occasioned it. On the eve of, proposing to Mdlle. Pochemolle, I appealed to the Duke of Hautbourg, with the utmost confidence, as to a brother, to know whether there had ever been any thing between him and the woman I wished to make my wife; and in return he deceived me. If the consequence of this behavior had been only to entail upon me the cruel humiliation of the refusal which followed, I should say nothing. But my proposal revived painful memories in Mdlle. Georgette's mind; it distressed her; and I have a right to resent that sorrow which I was the unwilling means of inflicting upon a lady."

"Your proposal distressing to Mdlle. Georgette! that I will swear it was not," replied the financier with a coarse laugh. "As to the other points, mon Prince, I had always imagined that where a lady's honor was involved, gentlemen were expected to be silent — nay, in some cases even to perjure themselves. You would not have had the Duke of Hautbourg blight a poor girl's reputation by too candid avowals."

"I would not have had a Duke of Hautbourg blight a poor girl's happiness by making sport of her affections," answered the Prince, excitedly.

"Well, but, let us be reasonable, mon Prince," said the financier; "when Horace Gerold seduced this shop-girl, he could not foresee that she would one day be honored with your love."

"Seduced her!" and the Prince looked at Prosper Macrobe with an expression in which sudden amazement was largely blended with indignation. "What do you mean by that, Monsieur Macrobe?"

"Well, made her his mistress, if you like the euphemism better," answered the financier, not less surprised. "You surely hadn't any illusions on this head?"

"Good heavens!" groaned the Prince, turning ghastly pale.

The financier had not suspected that the Prince could be unaware of the *liaison* between Horace and Georgette. Indeed, he fancied that the quarrel had been mainly caused by the Prince's intimate knowledge of what he — M. Macrobe — had only ascertained latterly. On beholding the Prince's woe-struck attitude he was for an instant disconcerted; but next moment the reflection occurred that here was an opportunity of terminating at a stroke the difference between the antagonists by proving to the Prince that Georgette was not worthy of the interest of an honest man.

"Why, don't you know?" said he, with affected concern. "Georgette Pochemolle was the mistress of my son-in-law long before his marriage, and — it is a cruel thing for me to acknowledge, but I do so to you — I have reason to fear that she is so still. I obtained evidence of this wretched fact but a few days ago; and I need not tell you what a blow it was to me. But least said soonest mended in such cases. I should only compromise my daughter's domestic peace by interfering. There is nothing for it but to let these passions wear themselves out."

The Prince was walking distractedly up and down.

"And to think I had set up this girl on a shrine in my heart," exclaimed he, in a bitter voice. "I believed in her — oh, what actresses women are! But," and he turned almost fiercely on M. Macrobe, "this does not alter my opinion as to your son-in-law's behavior, for even this fallen girl is proved to have acted more honorable than he. He would have suffered me, his friend, to give my hand to a courtesan, to his leman, and have polluted my hearth by and by by remaining my wife's paramour; but it was the courtesan who had too much delicacy for this arrangement!"

"Softly, sir," cried the financier, nettled; "I am sure my son-in-law had no such base design as that. He would have respected your hearth."

"Why should he have respected mine since he does not respect his own?" exclaimed the Prince, laughing contemptuously. "And is it you who defend him?" added he, surprise mingling with his disdain. "Why, of what clay can he be moulded, this man who not a year after his marriage, keeps a mistress whom he has seduced, and makes so little secret of the fact that his father-in-law, and perhaps his wife, are aware of it! A man so reckless of his good reputation, so

regardless of the decencies which even professed libertines observe, can have no soul worth the name. God forgive me, I am no Puritan, but I pity the poor lady who has wedded her lot to his; and you, sir, whom this marriage has made the relative of so degenerate a nobleman. As to wishing to win a victory over him, I desire to bar him out of the Legislature, as I would black-ball him at a club."

"I beg you to remark, mon Prince," interposed the financier, choler rising to his gimlet eyes, "that if I thought my son-in-law's conduct justified any of the stringent expressions which you use, I should not have delayed even a day in interfering. But if I have deemed it wise to make allowances for a young man enthralled by a clever and designing girl, and perhaps chained to her by that very fear of scandal which you accuse him of braving — for you certainly know by what manner of threats these women are accustomed to retain their victims by their side — I think, the least which a stranger can do is to imitate me. After all, the matter concerns me more than anybody else."

"Well, so it does," replied the Prince, wincing, but in a quiet voice; for after pacing in agitation on the hearth-rug during a moment or two, he was recollecting that M. Macrobe, as his visitor, had a claim to be spoken to undemonstratively. He resumed his seat, penned up his feelings with an effort, as a man might bottle generous, effervescing wine, and putting on a ghastly semblance of cheerfulness, said: "*Minora canamus*. I was just brooding when you came in over the chances of my having to adopt politics as a trade, should the company in which both our fortunes are cast meet with the fate that is being predicted for it."

"The Cr dit Parisien is as safe as the Bank of France," said M. Macrobe, hastily, but still scowling. "Have you all your shares still?" and his tone as well as his glance quickened as he asked this question.

"All," answered the Prince, with some dolefulness. "A ten-million francs' worth according to present quotations, though I had them for less than half that, as I believe you know; to-morrow, however, they may be worth less than I gave, and next year nothing at all if this fall continues."

"If you apprehend that, what is to prevent your realizing to-day?" retorted M. Macrobe, sharply.

"Just this," said the Prince, and this time it was his eyes that wore the searching expression. "I was warned the other day by somebody whose name I am not free to mention, but whose position gave

almost oracular weight to his words" (M. Macrobe seemed to prick up his ears), "that the *Crédit Parisien* was tottering. If I were to sell my shares I should be obliged to impart this bit of information to the man who bought them; and naturally he would, then, refuse to buy. Thus until I get sound proof that the *Crédit Parisien* is not tottering, my shares are tied to my hands."

M. Macrobe looked the Prince through and through: "And you would sacrifice ten million francs to this scruple?" said he.

"Please to fancy a moment that instead of so many thousand shares I possessed a like number of sardine boxes," answered the Prince, with good-natured calmness: "and that these boxes, all shining externally, were full within of rancid oil and uneatable fish. It would scarcely be an honest transaction, I think, to go and sell these receptacles on the market as full of good sardines?" and he arched his eyebrows with an air of inquiring remonstrance.

A ray as that of a dark lantern gleamed into the dark cavern where M. Macrobe was groping, and seemed to show him a way out.

"But what if I bought your shares?" he asked.

"That would be another affair," replied the Prince with pardonable alacrity. "You are the chairman of this company, and know all its secrets. If you buy, it will be with your eyes open to the risks, you run, and I shall be your obliged servant."

"Then prove it," exclaimed M. Macrobe, deluded by his own agitation into attaching an earnest sense to these conventional words. "Yes, Prince, I have no dearer wish than to see you and my son-in-law reconciled. Let us put an end to this unhappy difference"—

"Oh! pardon me," interrupted the Prince, coloring, and drawing himself up with his grandest air, "this sounds like a bribe." And he added in a significant tone, to warn his interlocutor from venturing twice on the same ground: "Let us talk of something else."

But they did not talk of something else, for, baffled and raging, M. Macrobe fled the *Hôtel d' Arcole*, leaving his heavy malison on it from roof to basement. It would have been better for him had he then proceeded quietly to his own house, and there seen Horace, who was waiting at home on purpose to tell him of the resolution he had formed with respect to *Clairefontaine*. This would at once have cleared off the clouds from his mind and set his noble soul at rest. But instead of that he drove to

the offices of the *Crédit Parisien*, and thus came in for a day of extremely unpleasant emotions.

The offices of the *Crédit Parisien* were of course situated in a palatial edifice. With the same spirit of generosity as had led the promoters of the company at the outset of affairs to vote themselves a handsome salary apiece, a commission had been given to an eminent architect to build a mansion regardless of expense—out of the shareholders' money. Humble stone was too poor to carry out the elaborate designs that were projected. The *Crédit Parisien* must needs be treated to marble and porphyry, granite and gilt bronze, also to statues of Commerce, Industry, and Finance, very expensive and slightly clad, beaming down on the public from sculptured frontal. And it may be accepted as one of the characteristic symptoms of the shareholder's mind, that there was not one of the shareholders who passed by this sculptured frontal and scanned its semi-nude deities, and not one who strode through its porphyry portico and noted the fretted vermicelli work thereon, but felt the richer for these utterly unseemly luxuries that had been distrained out of his pocket. Nay, there is ground for supposing that had the board economized at starting the two or three million francs it had wasted in building itself a house four times larger that it wanted, the shareholder, mind would have thought meanly of that board, and have complained of the lack of enterprise discernible in its undertakings. O shareholder, shareholder, my friend, and thou, tax-payer, his brother, what flats on earth so flat as ye!

Often had the well-pleased chairman seen the street in which his offices stood thronged with beatific physiognomies serene with the pocketing of fifteen per cent dividends. Pretty pink faces peeping out of broughams, and stopping him as he hurried by, crying: "O dear M. Macrobe! do come here and tell me what I am to do. See these papers; I gave seven hundred francs for them, and they are now worth fifteen hundred. If I were to sell them, you would let me have some more for seven hundred, wouldn't you?" Sleek citizens with round paunches greeting him bareheaded: "This is better than investing in three per cent *rentes*, monsieur." Playful co-promoters digging him in the ribs, and chuckling: "The pot boils, Macrobe, eh? the pot boils." But this morning it was another story. There were plenty of broughams and no lack of greetings as he descended from his own conveyance: but what greetings! Small gloved hands, and rough ungloved ones, gripping him firmly by the



coat-tails; blanched feminine features, and haggard masculine ones pressing distractingly around him; anguished *soprano* voices and hoarse *basses* calling upon him wildly for explanations: "What are these rumors, M. Macrobe?" "Is there any truth in this report?" "Why are the shares falling in this way?" "Have you seen that article in the 'Constitutionnel'?" "Unceremoniously shaking off these assailants like a pack of yelping curs, the chairman shouted to them: "There's nothing the matter at all. Hold to your shares or you'll be throwing coined gold out of the window," and darted up stairs. In the board-room most of the directors were assembled, a gloomy conclave; nor were they cheered by M. Macrobe's protestations: "This is nothing but a cabal got up by Gribaud, with whom I am at loggerheads." All eyes seemed to say: "Why the devil did you fall to loggerheads with Gribaud?" And the evident impression was that the chairman's speech was tantamount to what a captain's would be who were to sing out to his crew during a gale: "This is nothing. I am only at loggerheads with the north wind. It will be over presently." Yes, indeed, it might be over presently, when the north wind had worked his will, but then where would the good ship *Crédit Parisien* be? In the midst of grievous cogitations on this point, and tart debates on what had best be done, and what ought to be left undone, a clerk hurried in breathless, and said: "M. Macrobe, there is a panic at the Bourse. Shares have opened with a fall of 150 francs. If you could go there it might appease the public; but it should be done at once, for they have gone mad."

How do panics occur? Like storms, their course may be prognosticated by the vigilant, but upon the vulgar they come all of a heap, unawares. From the day when the formidable M. Gribaud had begun to blow Boreas-like upon it, the *Crédit Parisien* had ridden in troubled waters, first encountering small ripples, then little waves; and now these waves were becoming crested, were gathering ominously in strength and height, and beyond, long lines of surf, and rolling mountains of thundering sea, were breaking into sight. The small ripples were the influential shareholders, who had been set into motion by M. Gribaud himself; the little waves, the friends of these shareholders who had caught the alarm second-hand; the large waves were the great public who had got wind of coming evil by seeing the richer shareholders moving. It had taken about a month for the rumors to filter down from the topmost strata of shareholders to the undermost. But the final im-

petus to the panic, the last drop, as it were, that caused the cup to overflow, had been furnished by the closing of the Corps Législatif session. This being the signal for everybody to desert Paris and depart into the country, all who, possessing shares, had heard any adverse reports against the company, hastened to sell out before leaving town. Hence repeated falls several days in succession, and hence also the unavoidable consequence that the great herd of small shareholders being scared by these falls, it should have been a case of *turba ruil* or *ruunt* on the day following the dissolution. We beg here to notice another peculiarity in the shareholding idiosyncrasy. Your panic-stricken shareholder does not cloak his feelings under a decent garb of exterior nonchalance. He bolts out into the highway with his shares in his hands and his hair on end, as who should say a costermonger endeavoring to sell his fruit with this cry: "Who'll buy! Who'll buy? Rotten apples! Rotten apples!"

In the Bourse, a dozen hundred of these shareholders with their nearest kinsfolk and dependents, making up an infuriated swarm of some two thousand black hats, were bellowing like ten herds of agonized buffaloes giving tongue in concert. In the gallery overlooking the stone-paved Exchange and running all round it, frantic members of the gentler sex — no longer gentle at this moment — shrieked and wept and gesticulated to attract the attention of their stock-brokers below — in defiance of the by-law which enjoins that women visiting the Bourse should be seen and not heard, and to this end excludes them from the body of the hall. But who cares in such moments for by-laws? Maybe there is a by-law forbidding individuals to rush upon a broker twelve and twenty together, to seize him, hustle him, rend his heart and eke his garments, and yelp orders to sell into his ears under threats of personal violence? Maybe there is another by-law formally interdicting one man from ramming his fist into his neighbor's eye, under pretext that the neighbor having selfishly cornered a broker wants to keep him all to himself? And maybe a third by-law lays a total ban on the hurling of one's hat at a distant broker's physiognomy as an expedient for making him look your way? But if so nobody paid any heed to these regulations, nor, indeed, to any others which might be adorning the notice-board. Everybody was thinking about himself, howling, pushing, fighting, and perspiring in his own interests — and what a dignified animal man looks under these auspicious circumstances! Shouts of "*Crédit Parisiens* at ten fifty!" "Ten forty-five!" "Ten twenty, then;

who'll take at ten twenty?" flew upwards like sky-rockets.—"They say Macrobe has bolted!"—"Bon Dieu! I always knew it would happen; and to think I bought only a month ago at fifteen seventy!"—"Sacré baudet, will you let me pass?"—"Is it me you are addressing?"—"Yes, you; do you think I am going to stand waiting here all day until you've done jabbering?"—"Take that, you unwhipped cur. Piff. Paff."—"Sacré nom d'un chien! Paff. Piff."—"Hullo, there's a fight down there."—"Monsieur, you must give up your umbrella at the door" (this from a policeman).—"Damn my umbrella, sir!"—"Madame, up stairs is the way for ladies."—"Monsieur, I don't care for the rules, I must see my broker; and I shall."—Policeman impedes madame, who screams, slaps his face, and sheds tears.—"Crédit Parisien, nine fifty!"—"Bah! I wouldn't take it at eight, nor at seven!"—"Nine twenty!"—"Nine ten!"—"Nine! Crédit Parisien, nine hundred!"—"Good God! do you hear that? It's down to nine hundred!"—"Just heavens! I am father of a family, and invested all my life's savings in it when the shares were at fourteen hundred!—Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!" (moans, yells, and tears his hair out in bunches).—"Crédit Parisien at eight seventy!"—"Eight fifty-five!"—"Eight hundred!" (wildest uproar.)

At this moment somebody near the door rushed in with eyeballs starting and bawled:—"Here is Macrobe, AND HE IS COMING IN!"

"Macrobe! Macrobe!" thundered two thousand voices, and the Chairman was soon visible, hot, dishevelled, panting, struggling, being mobbed along like a deliverer entering a besieged city, or like a brigand being lynched.

But now the uproar was raised to its highest pitch by a conflict of opinions, between bears and bulls, the former gentlemen being well satisfied at the depression of stocks, and in no way anxious to see them rise again; the latter being just of the other way of thinking, and shouting lustily to M. Macrobe to make a speech. The scene that followed was hell let loose. Charenton in its cups, or the Zoological Gardens emptied on to the Boulevards des Italiens. Many a noble silk hat that had weathered gales and showers was doomed that day to an untimely end. Many a glossy coat, joy of its owner and object of envy to the tattered, was reft of its two skirts and converted into a mark for opprobrium and jesting; many a cambric shirt-front, rest to the eye of the beholder, was lacerated beyond the remedying of needle-craft. But, at last, the bulls, by reason of the number of their allies,

proving victorious, M. Macrobe was hoisted on to the table that stood within the iron pen railed off for the brokers' use; and after the bears, most of them with noses punched and cravats twisted awry by kindly efforts made to strangle them, had bawled themselves hoarse during seventeen minutes and a half by the big clock in the gallery, M. Macrobe contrived to obtain a hearing. He had stood firm during the tempest, like Napoleon on his rock in the well-known picture "St. Helena." His coat was buttoned up to his throat, one of his hands thrust into the breast of it, the other behind his back holding his hat; his pointed face and weas'ly eyes contemplated the multitude with no more expression than a steel mask might. But when he uttered his short harangue he did so with his might; and never was speech better appreciated. After all, the shareholding intellect desired nothing better than to be convinced, to believe and to go on trusting to any unlimited extent which its chairman might require. The words of the financier were therefore picked up and swallowed like bread-crumbs by famished poultry. When he concluded he was tumultuously cheered; and the effect of his consoling assurances became at once apparent in a cessation of the panic and a rise of the stocks.

But for all that the Crédit Parisien had received a rough shaking, and none knew it better than the chairman. Credit in finance is like the bloom on a plum—only touch it with the finger and that is the last of it. When M. Macrobe returned home late that afternoon he could almost have counted the number of days which must form the utmost span of the company's life, if nothing occurred to bring a turn in the tide. On the table in his study he found a new letter from M. Louchard.

This one was not couched in figurative style, being a comparatively harmless communication—at least so M. Louchard opined:—

"(Private and confidential.)

"SIR,—M. le Duc de Hautbourg has been followed and it seems that he has been in the habit of going to Meudon to see Made-moiselle Georgette Pochemolle every morning for this past fortnight. He went there yesterday early, breakfasted at the restaurant with mistress's brother, and returned again in the evening. He then admitted himself with a latch-key into the grounds and remained there more than two hours. His visits are matters of public notoriety at Meudon.

"I have the honor to remain, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"MOISE LOUCHARD."

M. Macrobe refolded this letter, and his grasp tightened over it.

"This is my last card," said he, "my last; and I must play it."

He went to the drawing-room, expecting to find his daughter there, and intending to ask her whether Horace had left word at what time he should be home that day. But Horace himself was in the room; and M. Macrobe perceived at a glance that Angélique, who was seated near him, looked happier than he had seen her for many weeks past. Horace rose, and, taking his wife's hand playfully, led her towards her father.

"I think, sir," said he, "Angélique has something to communicate to you."

And Angélique said with glistening eyes: "Papa, Horace has just been writing to his agent to prepare Clairefontaine Castle for us. We are going to live there for the future."

M. Macrobe by a master effort brought his features under control, so as to reveal little or nothing of what he inwardly felt; and he threw himself on to the sofa. But the effort must indeed have been a strong one, for he remained several moments without speaking, and during that pause the letter he was holding dropped unnoticed from his hand and fell among the sofa-cushions.

## CHAPTER XL.

### LOVE'S CALVARIES.

As M. Louchard accurately wrote, Horace had returned in the evening and let himself with a latch-key into M. Pochemolle's grounds, which grounds consisted of a garden about half an acre in extent, and embellished at one of its extremities with a belvedere, commanding an inspiring view of not less than half a mile of country. Knowing the indomitable passion of newly-retired tradesfolk for out-door walks on a week-day (such having been forbidden-fruit to them during their commercial existence), he had calculated that M. and M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle might perhaps be in the habit of going out visiting neighbors, and sometimes leaving Georgette — less enthusiastic about this pastime — at home. It was the season of the year when the days are just lengthening sufficiently to admit of after-dinner outings. Accordingly, he had glided into the garden, after first reconnoitring over the hedge to see that the coast was clear; and, under cover of a propitious laurel-grove, had crept to the belvedere and there ensconced himself, waiting for events. Setting aside the

morality of the matter, this was a foolish thing to do; for a man who introduces himself by stealth into a garden runs the risk of being collared at a turning by a gardener, or waylaid by an unexpected watchdog, or despoiled from a top bedroom window by a housemaid, and set down for one burglariously intent — in which last case the usual way is noiselessly to apprise the police, who march upon one strategically, and drag one out of concealment triumphantly and by the scruff of the neck. But when did lovers ever hesitate to do a foolish thing?

Horace, however, earned no recompense for his adventurousness. M. and M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle did, indeed, go out whilst he was watching; but Georgette remained in doors, and did not come out into the garden. Horace had not quite enough effrontery to enter into a dwelling-house with a purloined latch-key, or it may be that he was restrained by ignoring in what part of the house Georgette might be. Anyhow, after two hours' weary waiting, the draper and his wife having meanwhile returned, he withdrew.

But withdrew only to come another time. He was at his post again on the next night, and again on the next, and so on three or four nights a week for well nigh a month. Owing to his recent bereavement, he could not tell Angélique after dinner that he was going into society or to the opera. He was reduced to simulating a desire for a stroll, or an appointment at his club; and such is the proneness of marital nature to believe in its own sagacity, that he rather congratulated himself on the specious pretexts which he invented every night to rout suspicion. If men would but devote to worthy ends one-half the ingenuity they bestow on evil, what a change we might live to see on the world's surface! After the fifth night of bootless watching, Horace's passion being increased rather than diminished by the material obstacles it encountered, he resolved that, come what might, on a certain night at the end of the third week, he would see and speak to Georgette. He was mainly driven to this resolution by the fact that the Monday of the fourth week was the day on which he had arranged to start for Clairefontaine, so that, unless he saw Georgette now, he might not have the opportunity again for some time.

Dinner over, he hinted at a headache, to which Angélique assented with a pious falsehood, saying he looked a little unwell, and recommending fresh air. M. Macrobe, who, now that all his own wishes were being crowned, would not have grudged pearls to strew on his son-in-law's path, followed in the same strain; as did likewise Aunt Dorothée, who, however, suggested a wet

towel round one's head as a beneficent adjunct to the walk. So Horace was shortly clearing the road to Meudon.

That evening M. Pochemolle, on rising from table, remarked that it was a long time since he had seen his friend Bourbatruelle, late in the crockery way, now retired and owning a villa at Auteuil. Suppose they were to drive over and spend the evening with Bourbatruelle? Nothing loath to show off to M<sup>me</sup>. Bourbatruelle a brave watered silk gown resplendent with bugles, M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle consented; and so did M. Alcibiade, remembering that there was a M<sup>lle</sup>. Bourbatruelle, mirthful and goodly to look upon. Georgette would have been happy to go, too, but being engaged in finishing a piece of tapestry, which she had promised the curé of Meudon against Easter to deck one of his altars with, thought she had better remain at home, so as not to risk delay with her work.

"As you please, child," said M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle, a little tartly, for ever since that unlucky rejection of the Prince of Arcola's suit, M<sup>me</sup>. Pochemolle's maternal heart had borne a load of bitterness. There are filial offences which a mother never quite forgives this side of the grave, and refusal of an eligible offer is one of them.

More affectionate in his tone and look, the worthy ex-draper simply said, "Well, Georgette, we will take your love to the Bourbatruelles."

And so Georgette was left alone to finish her tapestry.

She went up stairs and sat down by the open window of her room—one that was located in a corner of the house overlooking both the garden and part of the road-way skirting it. The evening was mild and fine. On the lawns of all the villas within view, Meudonites were sipping coffee or wreathing blue clouds of cigarette smoke into the thin air, whilst their offspring crowded over gravel pies laboriously constructed, or gambolled with their little close-cropped French heads in and out of lilac-bushes. It was also a pleasant sight to see such Meudonites as had been for a stroll into the fields trudging homewards in groups down the hedge-lined roads, laden with rustic spoils, a little footsore, but contented and hungering for their *pot-au-feu*. Papa to the front, with straw hat in one hand, and prickly branch of scented may in the other; mamma, a little behind, with more may and cowslips; hopefuls closing the procession; small girl with bunches of limp daisies and buttercups, much the worse for being plucked; small boy holding a dead dormouse by the tail, slain in single combat. Then there were

red-breeched soldiers, who enlivened the road, trampling along fast, to be back in barracks in time for tattoo: a desultory knife-grinder pushing his vehicle towards Paris, and whistling *le Sieur de Framboisy* as loudly as though that melody were not interdicted by the police, for its disrespectful allusions to his Majesty; and presently came the sounds of a hurdy-gurdy, and of a voice singing sweetly an old and popular ballad to its accompaniment.

Georgette listened. It was a woman's voice; and she sang with that plaintive sadness which the instrument she was playing requires. But she seemed to be returning home after a toilsome day, for trudging slowly, she stopped no longer before any one house than the time to repeat a single verse of her song, and then proceeded, her hurdy-gurdy droning mournfully, almost weirdly, in the mean time. In this way she reached the Pochemolle villa, and would have passed on, but, looking up, perceived Georgette at her window, and so paused in the road. Turning the handle of her instrument in measured cadence, and drawing notes so low, tender, and melancholy, that they were like the strains of a young girl's dirge, she sang this:—

"Pour chasser de sa souvenance,  
L'ami secret,  
On se donne tant de souffrance,  
Pour peu d'effet;  
Une si douce fantaisie  
Toujours revient;  
Lorsqu'on songe qu'il faut qu'on l'oublie,  
On s'en souvient."

Georgette dropped her needle. There was not a word in these lines so true to nature, but might have been penned for her special case. How often had she not tried to forget Horace, and how often had not some *douce fantaisie* returned to keep his image ever present in her memory! She threw out some money to the woman, who called on the Virgin to bless her, and then she would have resumed her work, but the hands, unguided by the mind, which was just then straying far from gold and silver thread patterns, rested on the tambour-frame without moving. Of whom was she thinking? Of whom *do* women think? Of the men who love them most? Seldom. Of the men who have caused them most suffering, and whom they love the more for that reason. Georgette thought—and this was not the first time that month, that week, nor even that day—of the last time when she had seen Horace, of that short, cruel interview, when she had reviled him, and he had insulted her. But she did not think with anger, or resentment, of that scene; on the contrary, Horace had cleared

himself by his violent indignation. In hurling back upon her without restraint, without pity, the accusations she had launched against him, he had proved his innocence in her eyes more signally than if he had adduced innumerable arguments and circumstantial proofs. She blessed that passionate outburst which had restored again to his place in her esteem the man she loved; for the insults he had heaped upon her bore no grudge. Like a penitent kissing the rod that has lashed her, she murmured that she deserved them. But she felt contrite—bitterly, unspeakably contrite—for her unfounded suspicions against him. These she magnified into crimes, and would have done penance for on bended knees. A loving woman's heart is an unfathomable abyss of humility.

"That he should love another, what more natural, since my own heart and temper are so wicked," was her meek self-confession. And then she accused herself for ever having hoped to be loved by a man who was above her in every thing—in mind and soul as well as worldly rank—accused herself for having mentally despised Angélique, who was gentler and purer than she—accused herself for dreaming still about Horace, who ought to be sacred to her as if he were dead. Yet, underlying these repentant self-denunciations, was a heart-felt, though scarcely defined wish to see Horace, if but once more to ask his forgiveness for having wronged him. She deluded herself into fancying that this expiation was a duty; she knew it would be a relief. So these two, Horace and Georgette, were both tending towards the same point; they desired to meet and ask each other's pardons.

For several minutes after the minstrel-woman had disappeared—her touching notes lingering behind her like the trail that follows light—Georgette sat, full of emotion, applying the words she had just heard to herself, and thrilling at the echoes of them that vibrated in her heart. At last—it may have been after ten minutes, perhaps after twenty—she looked up from a particular flower in her embroidery, to which her gaze seemed riveted, and glanced into the garden. On the gravel path below her window stood a man, and that man was Horace.

He looked so sepulchral in his dark clothes—his black gloves and his face beaming paler from the dusk—that she started, and pressed her hand to her side as if she had seen an apparition.

"Mademoiselle," he said, with bated voice and in an appealing tone, "can I speak to you—a single instant?"

She descended into the garden instinc-

tively, having no control over her own will in the matter. She wondered, when she got there, how and why she had come down.

"Thank you," he cried fervently; then with impassioned ardor, "O Georgette! can you ever forgive me for my brutality to you? I have come on purpose to crave your pardon—for no other purpose than this. Remorse has been devouring me for my heartless conduct."

Paler than himself, more troubled, and more faltering, she answered: "It is for me to beg your pardon, M. le Duc—Monsieur Horace," added she, correcting herself on seeing a disappointed look flit over his features. "What can you have thought of me? Believe me, I did not speak what I feel. I hate myself for what I said to you!" And her eyes brimmed over with tears as she glanced up into his face.

He seized one of her hands, and pressed it to his lips.

"Hear me, Georgette," said he; "I love you, love you with all the might of my heart. Like a madman, I rushed into a marriage with a woman whom I did not really care for; I was blind as well as mad, for I did not see that it was you alone whom I loved. Let us not prolong our misunderstanding. Tell me that you love me. I have heard how you refused M. d'Arcola. Let me hear from your own lips that it was for my sake you did so." And, encircling her waist with his arm, he drew her to him, and lowered his face so close to hers that their lips almost touched.

She quivered from head to foot, struggled feebly, and then closed her eyes, as if to shut out the sun's rays.

"Yes, yes, I love you!" she sobbed deliriously. "I have loved you always, you know it."

This time their lips met. He covered her face, eyes, hands, with burning kisses; and her head drooped languidly, unresistingly, on his shoulder.

"We have wasted enough happiness. Georgette," whispered Horace wildly. "You know that if I were free, I would make you my wife; but human laws and conventionalities must not stand in the way of our felicity. We are wedded in the sight of Heaven, for the only marriages that can be sanctioned above are those of hearts linked together by love."

He spoke with the fervid tenderness of passion; but his words seemed suddenly to revive Georgette. She tremblingly disengaged herself from his embrace, and with wistful looks and voice of entreaty, said: "O M. Horace! let us not mar this one hour of happiness in our lives. I shall remember it all my days as the sweetest I

have ever spent; but we can never be more to each other than we are. Never, never!"

"But, hear me, Georgette," he exclaimed, trying to retake her hand.

"No, no;" and she sank on a form, burying her face in her hands. "We are both bound by duties — you to your wife, whom it would be cruelty to betray; I to — to" — Her sobs choked her. "I wanted to say, that I, too, am engaged — or nearly."

"You engaged?" cried Horace, starting back, colorless.

She did not immediately answer. Her tears were raining fast, and her frame shook with agitation.

"Do not judge me wrongly again," sobbed she at last. "You see, after I made you those — those wicked reproaches at our last meeting, accusing you of having married for money, and when you answered me that I, too, had jilted an honest man who loved me — that M. Filoselle — I thought that all you said was right; and I have been reflecting ever since that perhaps M. Filoselle imagined I had refused him for bad motives." She sighed sorrowfully. "And I would not have him think this," added she, shaking her head, "for such thoughts sour one's heart and make it unjust to others. You cannot conceive how perverse and uncharitable I was when I allowed myself to suspect ill of you. So, as poor M. Filoselle has been sending me letters for this last month by my brother, and as I see that he has been really expecting all along that I would marry him, and says that the happiness of his life depends upon it, I told my brother to answer him to-day, that I would keep the word my father once gave, and become his wife."

A few more tears coursed each other down her cheeks, and her hand shook as she wiped them away.

"Good heavens!" you married to that ludicrous counter-jumper!" exclaimed Horace, frenzied. "Why, I would a million times sooner see you wedded to the Prince of Arcola!"

"If I were to marry the Prince, and pretend to love him when I did not, I should feel as if I had sold myself to him," murmured Georgette, reddening. "I can pretend to love M. Filoselle, because I have nothing to gain by this marriage but the consciousness of doing right, by making a man who loves and suits me happy."

"But have you no pity on me?" broke out Horace, distractedly; "must this poem of our love be cut short at the first verse? Do you not see that you are condemning me to a whole life of unhappiness; and have I, who both love and trust and adore you, no greater claim to your compassion than this man, Filoselle?" He took her

hands beseechingly, and poured out a new torrent of vows and adjurations: "Georgette, Georgette! are you going to let this love rankle within me, all my days through, unchafed?"

She hesitated; then rose, and with the light of innocence beaming from her eyes, and her hand laid tremblingly on her lover's arm, whispered: "Horace, our love would rankle within us if we had ever cause to blush for it. But let us make of it something pure and sacred, enshrine it in our hearts as a second conscience to stimulate us to good and noble deeds, to kindly thoughts, to generous acts of self-sacrifice.

We shall be distant from one another, we may not meet again; but let us each feel that the other's silent love is with him to sustain and encourage in all the trials with which life is crossed. Then will these trials seem lighter. Wherever you may be, whatever you do, my heart will follow you, throbbing for all your pains, exulting at your triumphs. I have heard, though only lately, of your father's chivalrous honor and your own in spurning an estate which you could not accept with consistency; and if you knew how much I worshipped and admired you for this act! We women, you know, will always have our lovers heroes; and spotless honor, honor which knows no compromise nor weakness, is the highest form of heroism we conceive. For myself, there is no sorrow or pang that will seem hard to me to bear, now that I have your love. And after all, this sacrifice we are embracing will not last long. What are the few years of human life in comparison with eternity? For beyond this, there must assuredly be a world where those who have suffered here have their time of joy; and there, Horace, there, if we keep stainless in this life, we may meet never to be parted again."

She uttered these words in a quick tone, with almost inspired serenity on her face, and when she had concluded she raised herself, kissed him chastely on the forehead, and said, "God bless you, and good-by."

"Georgette, stay," he exclaimed in despair, darting forward to hold her back.

But she turned with a look so loving yet so full of maidenly dignity and reliance on his honor, that he remained rooted where he stood. Before crossing the threshold of the house she turned once more and waved him a last kiss with her hand, glanced to him a last good-by with her eyes. Then it was as if all light had suddenly vanished from his presence.

He was roused by the noise of wheels, caused by the Pochemolle family returning from their excursion. Night had completely set in. He snatched up his hat

from a form, and as soon as the house-door had closed upon the draper, his wife, and son, and the cab had rolled away, let himself out with his stolen latch-key, which he then threw over the gate on to the gravel path, in order that it might be found again by its owner. He would never need it again, that he knew.

Then he walked toward Paris with dejected gait and a heavy weight at his heart. He despised himself; yet, man-like, endeavored to shift some of the responsibility of his own abasement on to other and unoffending shoulders: "If I had married this girl," brooded he, "I should have been a different man. Curse my marriage, curse it!"

Whilst Horace was thus madly laying a ban on his own roof-tree, this is what was passing under it. After Horace had sallied out on his supposed stroll to cure his fanciful headache, M. Macrobe had very soon retired to go to a party, and left Angélique to the improving society of Aunt Dorothee and the Crimean Hero. The financier, by the by, had become very assiduous during the last three weeks in frequenting parties, and this with the object of letting everybody who still lingered in town hear that he was going to spend his summer at Clairefontaine, and that Clairefontaine was an estate worth *two* million francs a year (a little exaggeration does no harm). He was not mistaken in supposing that these recitals would operate beneficially on Crédit Parisien stock. The shareholding mind, with its habitual sagacity, opined that if the chairman admitted his son-in-law's income to be two million francs, four millions must be accounted as nearer the true mark: for did not these functionaries systematically understate their private worth? Whence it followed, as clear as a proposition in Euclid, that M. de Hautbourg having four millions a year in no way connected with the Crédit Parisien, it behooved every shareholder of that Company to sleep in peace, and rest assured that fifteen per cent was the stablest of institutions. But M. Macrobe did not merely succeed in dazzling the shareholder, which would have been a poor triumph. Wherever he turned, Society's smiles met him. There were not many members of the *haute fashion*, as French sporting papers call it, still in Paris; but such few as there were smiled as bountifully between them as though their numbers had been quintuple; and at one house where a "liquidation" rout was being given (i.e., an *omnium gatherum* of all the visiting list overlooked in previous invitations during the season), M. Gribaud, who had dropped in to talk with the master of the house,

one of his colleagues, took an early and easy opportunity of sidling up to the financier, and striking up a sort of truce with him.

"So you have reached the goal of your hopes, M. Macrobe?" said he, with the grim bluntness of an unfriendly bear.

"Not quite, your Excellency, but nearly."

"And I see you have come forward to contest the second seat in the Hautbourg department. If you win it you will be calling yourself a Liberal, and voting with the Opposition?"

"Heaven forbid! I shall ever be a Macrobist, and vote for Macrobe!"

M. Gribaud was pleased to grin.

"Well, you know, we have given orders to our people to remain neutral between Duke and Prince. We hinted to the latter that he would do well to retire, but he declined. He seems bitter against you, and is fighting you on his own hook."

"He is like his grandfather the field-marshal, who feared not treble odds, and took his thrashings gallantly," replied the financier, with smooth sarcasm. "And I, your Excellency, am I to be opposed?"

"Give us a pledge, Macrobe, give us a pledge," growled the Minister, button-holding the other, and drawing him into a corner. "What the devil can possess a man like you to make war on us? Why, you might be a minister yourself, if you were our ally."

"My address is Bonapartist from the exordium to the peroration, your Excellency. It concludes with the cry, '*Vive l'Empereur*.'"

"Ay, but there is not a word about '*Vive Gribaud*,'" grumbled his Excellency, wagging his head with distrust.

"That was a terrific shaking you gave the Crédit Parisien," laughed the financier, rather sourly.

"Bygones are bygones, Macrobe," grumbled the other, though a little shamefacedly. "I serve the state. It was not our interest to see you and your son-in-law become powers; but now that you are likely to become so whether you will it or not, our interest is to be friends with you. Statemanship is all summed up in that. Its sail with the wind."

"I have little fear about my election," said the financier with an air of half-mocking assurance, for which his Excellency would have cheerfully buffeted his weas'ly head. "But if my competitor is not supported, and if your Excellency will speak a good word or two for the Crédit Parisien in the same quarters where you have been whispering evil, your Excellency's name goes into the second edition of my address."

with a laudatory notice attached to it. My conditions are not hard," added the financier, his voice beginning to grate; "for whatever you may say or do, you can never repair the mischief you have done the *Crédit Parisien*. From the day when you drove all its official wire-pullers from it, its hours were numbered, but if you instruct the Government organs who have been abusing it by your desire to change their tune, and if you let it alone yourself, it may run on for another year or two; and this will enable me to retire from it before the crash, which is all I want."

"Well, well, I like a plain bargain; I let the *Crédit Parisien* alone and you let me alone, eh?" and M. Gribaud holding out his hand gripped the financier's fingers between its knotty joints like filberts between a nut-cracker.

So the peace seemed signed; and M. Macrobe gadded about night after night, from drawing-room to drawing-room, holding his head aloft, and evincing all the good-humor of success. But we must return to Angélique.

Left alone with her aunt and her cousin after her father had gone out, she thankfully assented to the Captain's offer to read to her, and composed herself on the sofa to work—or rather to play mechanically with colored wools—and to listen to him, or feign to do so. Reading, however, was but an amatory device of the gallant officer's. He read until he had sent Aunt Dorothee to sleep, which was never long; then he would lay down his book and talk confidentially and tenderly about himself by the hour—the only method he knew of making love. Captain Clarimon was of opinion that the French Army was to regenerate the whole civilized world by thrashing it—every nation taking its turn—the Russians had just had theirs; next would come the English, who had been wanting a thrashing for some time; then Austria and the Prussians, and lastly those miserable Spaniards and Swedes. He developed these views with no lack of fire, and was especially descriptive as to the parts he himself would take in the double work of civilizing and discomfiting, basing his predictions as to the future on his entirely satisfactory achievements in the past. Angélique always listened kindly, though sometimes venturing on some such simple question as whether it would not be possible to civilize some of the nations without thrashing them; but the Captain complained to himself that there was an absence of glow in her enthusiasm, none of that rapture, none of those effusive transports which the novels he had read had led him to believe were usual with fair women hearken-

ing to the deeds of heroes. To speak in military phrase, the brave warrior had been laying siege to his cousin for some time, and he found that the fortress was a little long in capitulating. This was so much the case that on the particular evening in question, having kept up a close bombardment for two hours, and having finally awaked Aunt Dorothee with a start by his *furor* in picturing for about the fifty-sixth time how those *pauvres diables d'Anglais* would all have been stewed at Inkermann if he and his men had not delivered them from the frying-pan, he retreated disheartened as he had done on many former occasions, and went out to solace himself with a night walk and a cigar on the Boulevards. Then Angélique, a little wearied by this sanguino-civilizing talk, laid aside her balls of red and yellow worsted, and closed her eyes as if for a nap.

"That young man's conversation is most terrifying and makes one's flesh creep," exclaimed Aunt Dorothee lugubriously. "My dear, it's ten o'clock and your husband is not in yet. He will make his headache worse instead of better, by walking so long."

"He will be in soon, I dare say, dear aunt," said Angélique, patiently. She, too, had noticed how long her husband remained absent; but she was used to it now.

"My dear, you are getting sleepy. That all comes of the late hours we kept before we went into mourning," resumed Aunt Dorothee, with conviction; "which mourning—Heaven forgive me for saying so!—is almost a mercy, for how people could remain out night upon night as we did, and not get into their beds until three or four in the morning, and sometimes not until the milkman had come, is more than I can understand in a Christian land. You must lie down and sleep, my dear. I won't speak."

Angélique faintly combated the impeachment of being sleepy, but, as the twinkling of her eyes belied her, she was soon fain to give in, and let her head sink back into the cushions. In less than five minutes more her regular breathing told that she was asleep.

And in that short sleep she dreamed—dreamed that she was in a lonely spot amidst trees, whose branches were tossed about by the wind, whilst deluges of rain fell around her from a dark, thundering sky. Seeking for shelter, she came to an oak, whose spreading canopy of foliage seemed to offer her protection, and there crouched. But at that moment some of the mist and rain before her cleared away like a curtain, and disclosed two figures walking hand-in-hand. They were the figures that were constantly



in her thoughts day and night — her husband's and Georgette's. She could see them distinctly, as if they were but a few yards off, and they were walking slowly; but there was this difference between their position and hers, that, whereas the storm raged in all its black fury above where she was standing, Horace and Georgette appeared to be in the sunshine, in a garden full of flowers and songs of birds. They looked lovingly into each other's eyes, stopped and kissed each other — then parted. And Horace, hurrying quickly away, came towards her under the oak. And she would have fled, but her limbs refused to move: she was petrified, and could not even utter a cry. He came rapidly and straight in her direction, but apparently without seeing her, for not until he almost touched her did he pause. Then the love that still gleamed on his face changed suddenly to anger and menace. He raised his hand and cursed her!

She started from her sleep, and sat upright with blanched face and starting eyes. "Aunt, where is he? Did you hear what he said?" she asked, wildly.

"What, dear?" answered Aunt Dorotheé, frightened and rising.

Angélique looked round her with horror-stricken gaze, as if the image she had just seen was still present to her there in the room.

"Oh! pity, pity," she cried at last, putting her hands before her eyes to avert the light. What a dream—what a frightful dream!"

Aunt Dorotheé, in alarm, pressed to her, and endeavored to comfort her. "You are agitated, child. It's those long walks this winter. I knew they could only do harm."

"It is over now, dear aunt," pleaded she, faintly and shivering. "It was only a dream"—but at her aunt's urgent request, she agreed to go to bed.

In her affrighted start from her dream, however, she had upset one of the sofa cushions on to the floor. She picked it up, but, in restoring it to its place, and settling it with the others, she noticed an edge of white paper peeping out of the cavity, formed by the tight drawing of the satin covering of the sofa at one of its corners. Thinking it was a letter she herself had dropped, she drew it from its nook. As fate would have it, it was the letter written to the financier with respect to Horace's doings, by M. Louchard, three weeks before, and which had lain there ever since it had fallen out of M. Macrobe's hand—a mute witness to the careful way in which drawing-room furniture is dusted in great houses by well-paid servants.

The letter had no envelope. She opened it and read:—

"SIR,—M. le Duc de Hautbourg has been followed, and it seems that he has been in the habit of going to Meudon to see Mdlle. Georgette Pochemolle every morning for this past fortnight. He went there yesterday early, breakfasted at the restaurant with his mistress's brother, and returned again in the evening. He then admitted himself with a latch-key into the grounds, and remained there more than two hours. His visits are matters of public notoriety at Meudon.

"MOISE LOUCHARD."

What passed within Angélique as she read this, none but God and herself ever knew. But the look of silent, agonizing, deadly woe and resignation that impressed itself on her face, would have moved a heart of stone. Aunt Dorotheé, seeing her stand lifeless as a statue, exclaimed, "Gracious mercy, my dear, what is the matter with you? Your face has completely changed this minute. Speak, dear, you frighten me."

And Angélique spoke:—

"It was not a dream, aunt dear," she said plaintively.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### IN. EXCELSIS.

NOR since that day of glory, when the mighty Count Alaric had ridden triumphantly into his good town, after routing his excellent king in the field adjoining it, had the borough of Hautbourg been thrown into such a state of commotion as that caused by the announcement that Clairefontaine Castle was to be opened again, and that the new lord thereof was coming to reside there. The oldest inhabitants affirmed that the return of the first Duke after Waterloo and the Restoration was nothing beside it; and that the solemn visit paid to the Castle by King Charles X. and Court was a paltry event in comparison. These were great concessions for the civic Nestors to make, for the depreciation of the past is not a common foible with those who are leaning towards three-score and ten. But then, it should be said, that the admission was, so to speak, imposed upon the Nestors by the imperious voice of public opinion, which would have flouted and scorned and held up to ignominy any individual so abandoned as to hint that the return of the young Duke to his ancestral towers, and the consequent flow of custom

that would accrue to Hautbourg tills, was not the most important episode in the modern annals of France.

All our old friends of the "Hôtel de Clairefontaine" *table d'hôte* were to the front in their jubilations. M. Ballanchu, the seedsman, in a new velvet coat, for had he not been sent for by M. Claude the agent to furnish seeds to the Clairefontaine gardeners for all their flower-beds? M. Scarpin, the bootmaker, who had taken the measures for five grooms, three footmen, two cooks, and the gamekeepers — all lately engaged at the Castle, and who saw boundless avenues of future boots unwind themselves before his imagination. M. Hohepain, the tax-gatherer, who would now resume the quarterly calls he used to make at the Castle, and with them the quarterly dinners in the butler's room that were wont to solemnize these occasions; and Farmers Toulmouche, Truchepoule, and Follavoine, who were not contented about their crops, and wanted improvements on their farms, and thought their rents ought to be lowered, and hoped to set all these points right out of the new Duke's pocket.

As for M. Filoselle, who ran down for a day or two, and with an eye to business, during the ferment of excitement, he was received with cordiality, and a generous forgiveness for past errors; but M. Ballanchu called upon him complacently to remember how thoroughly all his — M. Ballanchu's — predictions had been justified by the event, and how egregiously he, M. Filoselle, had strayed in his prophesyings.

"Do you recollect that discussion we had, M. Filoselle, when you attacked the Clairefontaine family, and I defended them? You said that the Hautbourgs would never come back among us, and I offered you to bet all my fortune that they would — knowing them, as I did, to be true noblemen."

"You did, you did," rejoined M. Filoselle, at first surprised, but then laughing, "and I remember I took the bet. It was ten sous. Here they are."

"I would never listen to any calumnies that were uttered against the Dukes of Hautbourg," exclaimed M. Scarpin, with determination.

"Noa," echoed Farmers Toulmouche and Truchepoule, with their mouths full.

"Twarn't likely," continued Farmer Follavoine, licking some sauce off his fingers.

"Was I the only one, though, at the table who fell foul of the Duke?" asked M. Filoselle, amused. "I fancied I had some supporters round the board."

All eyes became intent upon their plates; then, the pause being awkward, rose and converged, with touching unanimity, to-

wards M. Hohepain, who, being deaf, was not in a position to defend himself.

"So you and I minced the same meat, did we, M. Hohepain?" cried the traveller across the table.

M. Hohepain caught the words "mince meat."

"Yes," said he, "it's not bad, but ought to be served with poached eggs and a bit of lemon."

"Allow me to send you some more of this goose, M. de Filoselle," exclaimed M. Duval, the host, blandly. He had not forgotten the wordy tournament between M. Filoselle and M. Ballanchu three years before, nor the fears he had entertained lest the peace and some of his plates should be broken. He was anxious to avoid a repetition.

"No goose ever appealed to me in vain, M. Duval. Madelon, my child, here is my plate. I expected to find you in the possession of a husband, Madelon, and hold the gallantry of Hautbourg cheap, since I see you still a spifster."

"As if I wanted husbands!" exclaimed Mdlle. Madelon, pertly.

"Not many husbands, child, but one," suggested the traveller.

"I drink to the health of Monseigneur le Duc de Hautbourg," cried M. Ballanchu, as the sweets appeared on the table, and he filled his glass to the brim, undiluted.

"Stay," interposed M. Filoselle. "M. Duval, these gentlemen will allow me to offer them some champagne in which to drink this auspicious toast. Some of Mdme. Clicquot's vintage, if you have it."

The wine was fetched, the corks popped, the long glasses foamed, and M. Filoselle, on his legs, amidst convivial rapping of knives, said: "Gentlemen, I second the toast of M. Ballanchu. This is to the health of M. le Duc de Hautbourg, and God bless him! Gentlemen, I have the honor to inform you that I hope soon to be married (sensation), and my happiness on this occasion I shall owe greatly to the distinguished and amiable nobleman who is about to return to his estates, to scatter prosperity amongst you all. It is not using a liberty to term him my friend, gentlemen, for we have lived under the same roof. (Renewed sensation.) I have had the honor of grasping his hand (stupefaction), and he deigned to plead my cause with the very tortuous-minded person whom I hope soon to call my mother-in-law (prolonged marks of astonishment). But this is not all, gentlemen. In the course of business, I lately did myself the pleasure of forwarding to M. le Duc de Hautbourg a list of current prices of my employers, the MM. Campêche, wine-merchants, 367, Rue Lafite, second

house from the corner, and the answer I received was equally flattering and unanimous — being an order for twelve dozen bottles of Burgundy, and with it a cheque for the amount — one thousand four hundred and forty francs — not a centime less. (Emotion.) Messieurs, I contend that the nobleman who, whilst aiding the projects of true love, thus furthers the development of commerce — giving his orders on a liberal scale, cash down, and without asking questions, is — is all that can be said on the subject. (Loud and continued cheering — enthusiasm.) Gentlemen, I have but a word to add before finishing this after-dinner speech, which the Greek poet Virgil said ought to be short and sweet, like a burned almond. Last year, at the Paris elections, I voted for M. de Hautbourg — coming from Marseilles in the 7.55 mail express for the special purpose, and this year I look to your all following my example, in despite of prefects, curés, and all other functionaries, whom I respect when they are of my own way of thinking, but do not value that" (M. Filoselle courageously snapped his fingers) "when it is otherwise. Gentlemen, here is my toast: Long live the ex-Member for Paris! Long live the new Member for Hautbourg!"

M. Filoselle sat down amidst obstreperous rattling of knives, and energetic shouts of "Long live the Member for Hautbourg!" — M. Hochepain bawling the loudest, though he bawled wrong, saying, "Long live the Mayor and the Municipal Council!" under the impression that it was these civic dignitaries who were being toasted. Farmers Toulmouche, Truchepoule, and Follavoine, having never before drank champagne, gulped theirs down the wrong way, and then sneezed in unison — a touching sight. M. Ballanchu mopped his brow with his napkin, and then stoutly bellowed, "Vote for M. le Duc? Of course we will. I should like to know who wouldn't? I'd call him a cur."

"Quite right — never stick at trifles," responded M. Filoselle. "But, by the by, you've not forgotten that M. de Hautbourg is a sort of Radical, have you?" and he grinned with good-natured malice at the seedsman. "Unless my memory fails me, you have set your face against 'those vermin.'"

"What, I?" exclaimed M. Ballanchu, in the voice of one crying: "Just Heavens! was there ever so foul a charge?" "Why, I have been a Radical ever since — ever since, I don't know how long; and so are we all Radicals at this table — every man jack of us, except Hochepain here," added he, adroitly. "It must have been he who told you that."

And the entire table, except the Hochepain afore-named, protested with one accord, "Yes, yes, it must have been Hochepain."

But it was not only at the table-d'hôte of the "Hôtel de Clairefontaine" that the resolution to vote for the Duke of Hautbourg was included in the programme of arrangements destined to celebrate his return. Everywhere the Hautbourgian conscience became penetrated with the sudden force of liberal principles; and the Prince of Arcola, who, on first coming down, had found the borough not indisposed against him, had, on the third or fourth day, seen the wind veer round completely. Nor was the prefect more fortunate. The private instructions given to this gentleman were enigmatical; and, to a less expert functionary, might have seemed distressing. He was not to oppose the Duke of Hautbourg, and he was not to let him get through, if he could help it; which means, that outwardly his demeanor was to be smiles and honey; but that inwardly his soul was free to brew crafty rumors, which the trusty agents of the prefecture would disseminate perfidiously on village swards, and in borough market-places, to undermine the candidature, if possible. To make matters worse, these instructions came late. The prefect was in the heat of battle when he got them. Already had the four hundred mayors of the department been drilled and equipped for the fray; already had the four hundred vicars been put through their political catechism, reproofed, exhorted, and taught the way they should go; already had justices of the peace, commissaries of police, and rural guards been told in no devious language wherein — and wherein alone — their hopes of promotion lay; and already had the prefectural organ, unique journal of Hautbourg, fired volley upon volley of leading articles very heavy to read, but effective nevertheless, as heavy shot is. It was rather hard that all this labor should have been in vain. Rather hard to disband the mayors, to unlecture the vicars, to enjoin the justices of the peace, policemen, and others to remain religiously neutral; and to make the furious artillery of the prefectural organ vomit pretty sugar-plums instead of bomb-shells. Still, all this had to be done. When M. Gribaud requested one of his prefects to swallow a leek, that prefect swallowed the leek, and made no bones about it.

So Church and State, the governing and the governed, all seemed in league to make things pleasant for the Lord of Clairefontaine. Carpenters began running up triumphal arches, painters to adorn them, drapers to deck, and gardeners to festoon

them. Lumbering wagons were seen groaning on the road to Clairefontaine under piles of new furniture, and the Hautbourg upholsterer, exalted by a cubit in his stature, communicated to all who would hear him, that it was he who had executed the order for these goods, none but he. Like stories told the grocer, the chinaman, and the candlestick-maker, whose merchandise was finding its way to the Castle in bales; and the butcher and baker smiled, foreseeing that their turn would come presently. Then the clergy and the mayoralty laid their heads together to plan whether the two should amalgamate in receiving Monsieur le Duc, or each give him a separate reception. And hereupon a tremendous question of etiquette arose as to whether the mayoralty should receive M. le Duc in official capacity, i.e. clothed in its insignia of office, or merge its welcome within that of the multitude. The point was deemed so important that the united wits of the prefect, his whole council of prefecture, and two sub-prefects, declared themselves unable to solve it, and it was referred to the Ministry, who in doubt submitted it to the Tuileries, and the Tuileries, always full of tact, decided, that as the return of the lord of Clairefontaine was an event with which his Majesty could not but sympathize, the authorities should receive M. le Duc in state; nay more, that as the crowd would probably be great, and, perhaps, importunately affectionate, the ducal carriages should have a brigade of mounted gendarmes to escort them from the station to the Castle. Here was honor with a vengeance, though, to be sure, there were some who hinted that as the duke's entry had been fixed to take place on the very day of the Hautbourg election, the gendarmes might be intended quite as much to overawe the population from uttering seditious shouts against his Majesty, as to swell the triumph of his Grace.

Whatever may have been the opinions of the prefect on this head, he kept them to himself; but about this time a really transcendent expedient for satisfying everybody, Tuileries, ministry, affectionate population, and his own self, occurred to his great mind. It was obviously quite unsafe and useless to spread defamatory rumors against the duke—unsafe because these rumors might be traced to their source, and useless because the affectionate population could no longer be brought to believe them. But there was a way of making the very enthusiasm of the electoral mind act as a lever for overturning the duke's election, as who should say steam set to explode the engine it is propelling. The prefectural agents—generally much esteemed and un-

suspected members of municipal councils—began to be lyrical and gushing about the bright young Seigneur who was coming back to his home. Only, they sighed and muttered what a pity it was he should be wanting to get into the Chamber again, for if returned, he would certainly live three-fourths of the year at Paris, whereas, in the contrary case, they would enjoy the inestimable benefit of his society all the year round. The prefectural organ scored the music to these laments, and came out diurnally with little insidious notes, such as, "M. le Duc, who is returning amongst us for a few short weeks." "M. le Duc, who will henceforth be with us at least a month or so every year." "M. le Duc, who will soon be absorbed again in the vortex of politics," &c., &c. These were good tactics. They allowed the prefect to turn the enemy's flank, to work havoc, and to sow confusion without appearing to do it. There was no elector, however opaque, but took in this maxim: If the duke is at Paris he can't be here, too. Several faces began insensibly to lengthen; sundry brows to brood; the election grew to be a less popular subject of conversation than it had been before. But nobody said any thing. It was one of those under-water commotions that perform their ravages at a silent depth below the surface. Somehow, though, an observer might have fancied that people glanced often and pensively at M. Hochepain the tax-gatherer; as though, under certain contingencies not as yet definable, that personage might be turned to practical account. It would always be feasible to say, "I protest and vow that I voted for M. le Duc. It must have been Hochepain who did all the mischief."

At last the great day dawned.

Dawned with golden sunshine, speckless blue sky, and pealing of bells, as if for a marriage feast. Hautbourg fluttered all over in bunting from its nethermost street to its uppermost. The "Hôtel de Clairefontaine" seemed one mighty laurel-bush blossoming with flags. The statue of the Count Alaric had a crown of bays set conspicuously on its head; and the museum of stuffed birds—pride of the department—had displayed a white eagle with a scroll between its claws:—

Au Fils de ses bienfaiteurs  
La Ville de Hautbourg  
Souhaite Bienvenue.

On the pavements thronged densely, expectantly, solemnly, and palpitantly, more suits of Sunday best than had ever been seen gathered together in one spot within that borough, on the same day. Peasants from the villages in indigo blouses, and

with scarlet umbrellas under their arms; peasant women with white cone-caps towering sprucely out of sight, smart kerchiefs pinned cross-wise on their bosoms, golden crosses pendent from black velvet ribbons round their throats. Every window was abloom with new bonnet-strings; every door-way had its cluster of sight-seers holding on anyhow, as it pleased Heaven, by the lintels, by the backs of chairs placed so that those behind might see over the heads of those to the fore, by the shop-fronts. Now and then a wag would cry: "Here they come;" and there would be a rocking forward, a headlong heave, and some well-laden chairs, taken unawares, would crash down supine, they and their cargoes. Upon which general merriment: people are easily exhilarated in such moments. Suddenly a shout, a long murmur, and then suppressed excitement as three splendid barouches, each drawn by four horses, and flashing with fresh paint, armorial scutcheons, and purple and gold liveries of postilions and outriders sweep, at a stately trot down the main street from the castle on their way to the station. Horace had left his agent to manage matters, and the agent, directed by M. Macrobe, had managed them royally. Almost immediately, new murmur, and then imposing apparition of the Mayor and Municipal Council: the former in a new hat, and with a tri-colored scarf round his girth; the latter treading on each other's heels, clean shaved, shy at being looked at, but impressed with the gravity of the situation, and prepared, like Roman senators, to do their duty to the last. Then, triumphant march in lonely glory of Monsieur the sub-Prefect of Hautbourg, majestic in a silver-spangled swallowtail, a cocked-hat too big for him, and white gloves, which he cracks as he strides in trying to get into them. Next, the local clergy in cassocks, not chasubles, but headed by an archdeacon great at controversy, gaunt-eyed, and evidently pregnant of a speech. Lastly, the gendarmes, yellow-belted, pipe-clayed, prancing, and much admired by the cone-capped peasant-women. Then, a lull. The tower-clock of Ste. Brigitte's chimes musically the three-quarters past something. It is the hour. A moment more, and the piercing whistle of the express is heard in the distance.

Then — but why describe such a sight, or how describe it? How phonograph delirium on to paper? Again and again, peal upon peal, round upon round, rose the cheers, the shouts of welcome, the benedictions. Down fell the nosegays in showers, thick, fragrant, pitiless, everywhere, on the horse's heads, under their feet, in the carriages, on the laps of the

carriages' occupants, covering hoods, seats, spatterdashies, with white, red, pink, and lilac petals. Handkerchiefs, banners, scrolls, waved, flapped, tossed to and fro as if blown by a gale. The gendarmes, clearing the way, ploughed slowly through a mass of outstretched hands, uplifted children, agitated hats, like fishing-smacks steering their keels through a surf; and above this astounding din, this frantic tumult of a city in a fever, rose the riot of the belfries and the crashing strains of brass bands drawn up under the triumphal arches.

Horace moved his hat off and on, very pale, and bowed without respite during three miles. He was startled and dazzled, but if ever man felt himself master of a town and king of it thenceforth, assuredly that man was he. And his heart beat fast, and his temples throbbed as he thought that this ovation was but the prelude to others, the first step in a long vista of power and fame then opening before him. In the second barouche, M. Macrobe, by no means overcome, but beaming, smiled and bowed to the crowd as General Monk may have done, to whom M. Gribaud had not inaptly compared him. But it was General Monk become Duke of Albemarle, knowing what was what, and saying within himself; "All those cheers of yours, my friends, are of my manufacture — don't let's have any mistake about it." Beside the financier sat Aunt Dorothée, but the worthy lady could scarcely be compared to the Duke of Albemarle's sister, if that illustrious man possessed such a relative. Scared, in an utter state of collapse, and ready to cry, she whimpered her orisons beneath her breath, and dismally expected to meet the end of the world at the termination of all this. And ever and anon in her bewilderment she gazed stupefied at the bunting, reflecting that there was enough there to clothe ten villages; and at the purple vestments of the outriders, and the satin linings of the carriages, and at the prodigal waste of flowers, with disjointed thoughts as to what all these things must have cost. In the third vehicle was another scene. There the delighted Mr. Drydust, self-invited, held forth to Jean Kerjou, come as special reporter to the "Gazette des Boulevards," to M. Gousset and to the Crimean Hero, about the marriage of his Pomeranian friend, Count Trinkgeld, of which the present festivities reminded him. The coming of age of his other friend, Lord Wildoats, had also been very remarkable. But he was inclined to award the palm to French solemnities of this kind. To begin with, they were rarer, and then the people shouted more, and weren't ashamed to shed

tears at the sight of one ; " Which is what I like," said Mr. Dr. dust.

And so saluting and full of emotion, or radiant and quietly chuckling, or terrified and miserable, or agreeably anecdotal and loquacious, according to the mood and temper of its individual members, the cortège moved on its way : until the park-gates of Clairefontaine were passed, and all other feelings became immersed in one dominant, though voiceless, burst of admiration for the lordly castle, over whose towers the standard of the Hautbourgs was now waving for the first time after such a long period of mourning.

The tenantry were marshalled in respectful rows ; on the marble staircase the dependents had arrayed themselves to do obeisance ; and as the carriages stopped, the bare-headed steward stepped forward to assist the Duke and Duchess to alight, and said, " Welcome to Clairefontaine, Madame ; welcome to your home, Monseigneur."

It was mellow evening before Angélique could withdraw from the feasting, and toasting, and speech-making, which, under the form of a breakfast to local magnates, officials, tenants and guests, took up the whole afternoon from mid-day till six. Then she contrived to glide out into the park with Aunt Dorothée, whilst a good many of the gentlemen sped Hautbourwards to be present at the close of the poll, and bring back the result early.

She wanted to be alone, and to think.

With the letter she had found a day or two before pressing on her bosom like a cilice, with the memory of her short, frightful dream glaring before her eyes like a fixed vision, how wonder, that during the rejoicings of the morning, her own spirit should have been as heavy as that of one bereaved amidst a banquet ?

Bereaved indeed ! Bereaved of all that made life worth living for. Confidence, hope, the sense of being loved and of having a blessed part to perform in effecting the happiness of a loved heart.

All this was gone now. All washed away by one black tide. *Omnes fluctus tui et omnes gurgites tui super me transierunt.*

She had not had the thought of destroying the letter. She had kept it next her heart. Why, she scarcely knew. But there was a vague idea, a trust, that it might help her to take a resolution, and accomplish it. Early Christians going to martyrdom hung amulets about their necks to give them fortitude.

On the way through Hautbourg the women had been moved by the pale, young, and beautiful duchess, who smiled to them

so softly, yet with such wistful melancholy as she bowed. " She was a little dazed, poor thing," said they. And the men, not less compassionate, remarked, " It seemed to frighten her, poor lady."

Angélique was feeling all the way as if she was usurping the place she held, as if the cheers and welcomes she received were not hers. She entered Clairefontaine like a stranger. She had heard of those death's-heads put on the table at feasts. She was as one of these. What right had she to a place in her husband's castle, she who had no room in his heart ?

" Where shall we go to, dear ?" asked Aunt Dorothée. " Gracious mercy ! it is a boon to be out in the fresh air alone again. How people can go through all we have this day, and not be struck ill in their beds is more than I know, my dear."

Angélique looked round and saw a sheet of water glancing under distant trees in the golden light of the setting sun.

" Let us go that way, aunt, dear," she murmured.

The lake was a broad and deep one, with a leafy island of willows in the middle, and an ornamental grotto or two dotting its margin. These grottoes had been used as boat-houses, or arbors in which to picnic in summer weather ; but, deserted for years, they were now carpeted with velvet moss, and drops of crystal water fell like stalactites from their roofs.

To the largest of these grottoes went Angélique and her aunt. The evening was fairy-like, and the herds of red and fallow deer trooping away, affrighted at the approach of footsteps, lent an air of sylvan beauty to the noiseless scene. The grotto stood in a retired bend of the lake, and nature was so still around it, the water so profound, the foliage so dark and clustering, that Aunt Dorothée, a little awe-struck, whispered, " My dear, how death-like this is ! It makes one think of graves."

" Let us go into the grotto," said Angélique.

This grotto had two chambers, one below and the other above. They were connected by a winding staircase of rocks and shells, and from the upper room, which, like the lower, had only three walls, the fourth side being open over the lake, a wide view of the surrounding park could be had. Both women stood gazing at the lake during a minute, and then Angélique, with a strange expression in her eyes, which her aunt called to mind later, suddenly kissed her, — once, twice, — silently.

" Aunt, dear, I am going to ascend the staircase to see the view," she then said.

" Oh, my dear, we shall never be able to get up those stairs !"

"No, don't you follow me, aunt; it will be too steep. I shall not be a minute."

And she began her ascent; but half-way she stopped, turned, and again looked at her aunt. There was that same strange look in her eyes, only deeper and moistened. She kissed her hand to the good woman who had been all her life as a mother to her, and the next instant was in the upper grotto.

Then she looked round. There was nobody in sight. The air was so still that the willow-branches scarce touched the water with their green lips; the water was calm, deep, and clear; one could see the white bed of sand some twelve feet below the surface.

"It must be a gentle death," said Angélique, gazing at that white bed,—"like sleep."

Then she looked once more around her, and at the corners of the grotto, and below her feet at the slippery ledge overlooking the lake.

"It will free *him*," she murmured, "and I shall make him happy, which I could not do by living. But he must never know that it was done on purpose. They will think it was an accident,—that I slipped. I will scream as I fall."

She unfastened her dress, took out the letter, and threw it into the lake, with a little stone in it, so that it might sink.

"You will not punish me for this, Almighty God!" she said, dropping on her knees on the brink, and clasping her hands humbly; then, raising her hands aloft at the precise moment when the sun sunk out of sight, she uttered a wailing cry, and allowed herself to fall forward.

It was not till almost an hour afterwards that the crowd reached the spot—appalled, hurrying, bringing drags, ropes, and restoratives. Aunt Dorothée had at first fainted, and could not tell how long she had remained senseless, before strength returned to her to crawl away, and summon help; but when she reached the Castle she found it already dismayed. A startling piece of news had just been brought in by reluctant messengers. The new lord of Clairefon-

taine and his father-in-law had both missed their elections, and simultaneously a telegram from Paris had brought the news that M. Emile Gerold had been elected, in spite of himself, in the Tenth Circumscription of the Seine. The Duke had made no remark, but he had bit his lips, and turned ashy white. As for Monseigneur's father-in-law, he looked like to have a stroke of apoplexy.

This is what the servants were whispering to one another in the quadrangle of the Castle when Aunt Dorothée appeared amongst them, like a ghost, and shrieked, "Help! help!—my child—the Duchess—your mistress—has fallen into the lake!"

But the crowd might have spared itself its haste, its efforts, its well-meant ministrations; for when they drew the fair young body from the water, it had sunk into that last sleep from which no restoratives can revive us. A great circle was made, and every head was uncovered, as, whiter than a marble image in the moonlight, Angélique was laid on a hurdle-bier covered with soft branches.

"Poor child, poor child!" cried some. "She slipped off the grotto."

"Monseigneur," said a diver, reeking wet, and approaching Horace, who was holding his wife's head whilst the men were lifting the bier; "I found this paper close to the poor lady so to say, near her hand."

Horace unfolded the paper with trembling hand. It was M. Louchard's letter. Then those who watched him saw his knees shake and his body stagger forward heavily. He fell prostrate with his face to the earth, and his lips sealed on the hem of his wife's garment.

The great circle standing around respected this grief and remained motionless waiting till he should rise; but as his position did not change, somebody advanced and said: "Monseigneur," and laid a hand gently on his shoulder. Then he swayed a little to his left and rolled over by his wife's side, her hand falling softly on his in that motion, in silent token of forgiveness.

He was dead.

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